



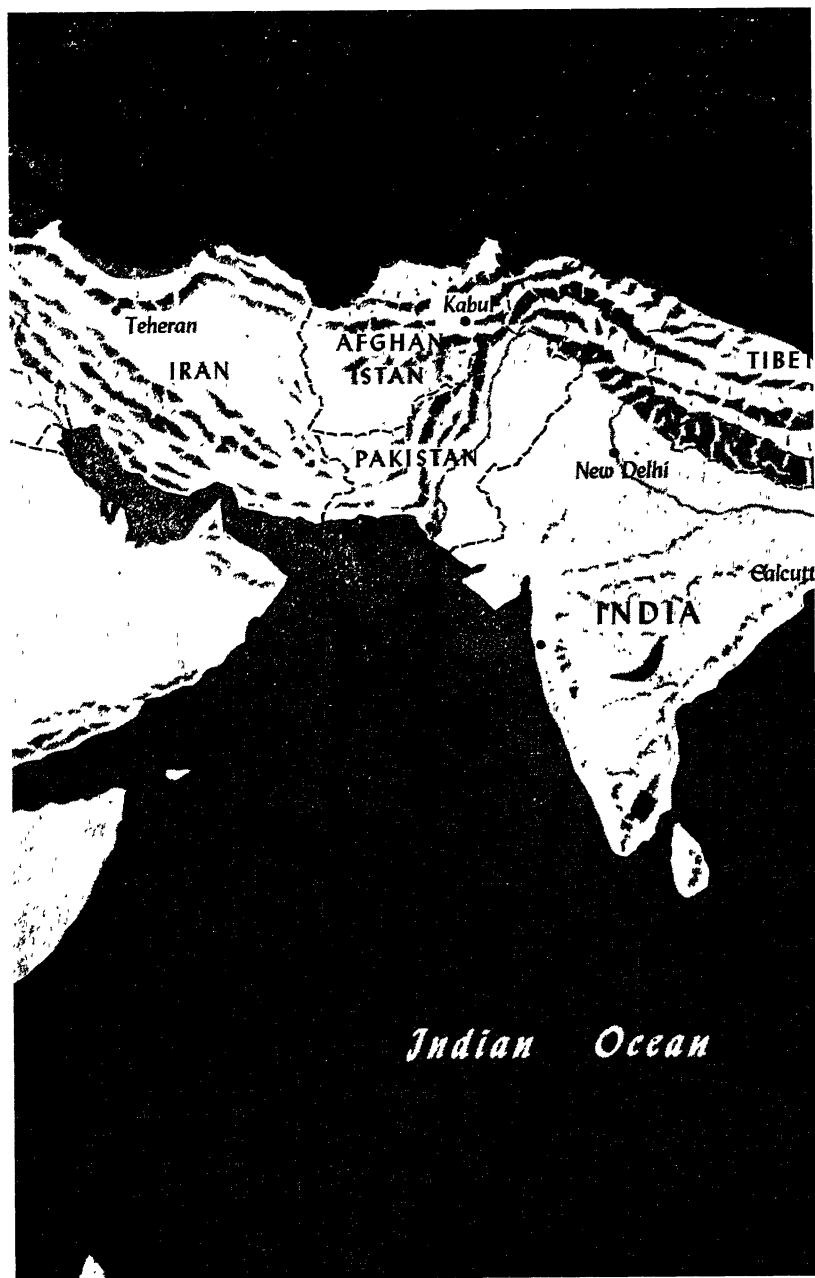
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**RED STORM OVER**



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*RED STORM*  
**OVER ASIA**

*by* ROBERT PAYNE

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*for*  
**THAKIN NU *and* SOETAN SJAHRIR**  
*in homage*





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## INTRODUCTION

THIS BOOK is concerned with the Communist march across Asia, chiefly during the years 1948-1950. I have not dwelt wholly on the subject of the Communists, for it seemed necessary to place Communism in its proper setting and to discuss those countries, like Indonesia, where Communism has failed or is in abeyance, and to discover the reasons for its failure, just as elsewhere it has seemed necessary to discuss the reasons for its success. During those three years, the most significant events in Asia were the Communist conquest of China, the extension of the influence of the government of the Indonesian Republic over the majority of the islands of the Indies, and the war in Korea: in all these events Communism played a major part, and so they are studied here at some length. In the other Asiatic countries I have contented myself with a discussion of the background, and I have tried to measure the degree and kind of Communist penetration. Inevitably, there is little here about the quarrel between Pakistan and Kashmir and India, and nothing at all about Thailand, because neither the quarrel nor the nation appears to play any major part in the development of modern Asiatic history.

Anyone looking at the map of Asia where the Communist-occupied territories are marked in red sees a vast red thundercloud from which a few drops of scalding rain are descending. There are drops in India and Pakistan, in Iran, in Burma and Malaya; there are large splashes in the Philippines and in Indochina. A thundercloud cannot be contained. It must pass on or be broken up, or it must change into some other kind of cloud altogether. The very shape of the thundercloud is something that should be studied carefully. What is clear is that unless radical measures are taken, the raindrops will become a flood.

The thundercloud has been gathering for a long time, and before it is finally dissipated, if it is ever dissipated, we can expect more raindrops to fall. But we should know why it has come about and

why so often the peasants call out for its rain. We must think of Asia as a whole and take measures which apply to Asia as a whole; it is useless at this late date to hope that the flood can be diked, or that armies can roll back the flood. They *can* for a while, but unless there is a social program which appeals to the Asiatic peasants, no force on earth can prevent us from being overwhelmed. It is our task to find that social program; and it is nearly too late.

Ten years ago, when I first went to Asia, Communism was not a force to be reckoned with. There were the Chinese Communists in Yen-an, but there were almost no others in positions of power. Communism has fed on the dislocations resulting from the war. There were a handful of Communists in Malaya and the East Indies, but they were not a threat. For most of us even then, Asia was a blue, misty abstraction: there were coral islands with emerald-green palms; there were moaning doves in Malacca; the mountain of Penang was lost in silver clouds; and there were all the rice fields stretching to the sunset. I do not think I realized how real, intimate, impulsive, dangerous, and generous Asia was until I traveled through Java and Bali shortly before the outbreak of the war. There was a toughness in these people which suggested that they would not long remain under the Dutch. Once in Bali a handsome young prince said through clenched teeth, "We shall throw them out, to the very last man," and I remember saying, "But you have learned much from them?" "Yes," he said. "We have learned from them that we do not need them." It was a theme I was to hear throughout the Far East, and yet it was always curiously modified. Ultimately, there was the knowledge that the East and the West needed each other and could not exist without each other. In the beehive temple of Chandi Mendut, not far from the present capital of the Republic of Indonesia, there was a Buddha made of a golden sandstone some time in the eighth century. The instep of the Buddha had been rubbed smooth by the kisses of the faithful, and a perpetual offering of flowers glowed at the base of the pedestal. The statue was fashioned by the Indian conquerors of the islands, but unmistakably there could be discerned the influence of the Greek sculptors of Apollo. I saw the same in Yen-an, where a T'ang dynasty head showed the influence of Greek masters. It was in these ways that the influence of the West had been felt in Asia at its best. When we

attempted to exploit the colonies, we must have known that the empires were only temporary and that in the end the people would erupt.

We tend to speak too often of the influence of nationalism in the Asiatic revolt. That battle has been won, or nearly won. Today far more complex forces are at work: all over Asia there are revolutions for purely social ends. Having been kept silent so long, the peasants have decided to speak. The "reasonable revolution" as envisaged by Soetan Sjahrir occurred in only one republic; in all the others the unreasonable influence of a foreign mythology, with all its attendant ghosts, its book of punishments and rewards, its peculiar ritual and meaningless words, has emerged. But before we criticize the Asiatic peasants who have come to believe in Communism, we should ask ourselves how much of mythology there is in our own use of words like "democracy" and "freedom." We tend to regard Asiatic Communists as sinners and wonder why they fail to show an adequate guilt, but it would be better if we looked at Asiatic land titles and wondered why the peasants have lived uncomplainingly for so long, for then we might realize that the complaints had always been there but that no one had heard them.

Shortly after the Pacific War broke out, I found myself by some accident piling ammunition into a Rolls-Royce and racing it across the Singapore dockyard to the destroyers which had gone out to rescue the survivors from the *Prince of Wales* and the *Renown* and had then returned to their base. The sailors stood drenched and silent beside the sea wall, gleaming in the dark. Sometimes they would look up at the sky, for we expected a parachute descent and had prepared no poisoned stakes for the Japanese, though we learned later that the Dutch in Soerabaja had taken a leaf out of the guerrilla manual of tactics and planted them everywhere. It was a ghostly night. Somewhere to the northeast a battleship and a heavily armed cruiser were at last resting in the mud at the bottom of the sea. Before us lay the dark forests of Johore. I walked up the gangway, found the officer of the day, and told him of the Rolls-Royce packed to the roof with anti-aircraft shells. "I don't suppose we will need them," he said, "but every damned thing helps. It's every man to the ropes now." So it was then, and so it is now.

Less than three weeks later, by another accident, I found myself

traveling in the Blue Train to the battlefield of Changsha. There, twenty-four hours before we arrived, a Kuomintang army had hurled back the Japanese, who were attempting to cut down through the rice-bowl province of Hunan. On the way we stopped at Hsiang T'an, a dark and ill lit town on the border of the Hsiang River, smelling of silk and garbage. We asked what had happened there, and we were told that the city lay on one of the great imperial roads to the south, possessed twenty or thirty industries, and was famous because two poets had been born there. The Kuomintang official then added gravely: "It's the place where Mao Tse-tung was born. It ought to be burned to the ground." I had not known such hatred was possible: it was my first introduction to the Communist leader.

Some years later I met him. He did not look notably different from the young Balinese prince or even from the officer of the day on the destroyer at the naval base; he was concerned with things as they were, hardheaded, only remotely at the mercy of mythology, with the manner of a young student and the bearing of a natural leader, with a fine forehead and searching eyes. Once, when we were talking of the heavy guns which were being brought up by the Kuomintang, he said: "They can bring up all the guns they want. We'll fight on, if necessary with our hands and feet." I could not imagine a Kuomintang officer speaking in that way.

After the battle of Changsha, I was sent into the Chinese universities. These were small mud and bamboo huts erected in the fields; the peasants planted rice up to the doorways, and soldiers were stationed nearby. In Kunming I watched the peasant soldiers returning along the Burma Road to die. Many of them were stricken with malaria. None except the students cared for them, and often they lay down to die in the little caves on the side of the road. Wen Yi-tuo spoke bitterly of a government which allowed such deaths, and was murdered for his pains. The students starved; so did the soldiers; in the government palaces in Kunming there was incredible wealth.

Later I flew to Calcutta from Peking and arrived there on the day in the summer of 1946 when the massacres broke out. I left the massacres behind and wandered over India, and I had long talks with Nehru, Jinnah, and Liaquat Ali Khan, and found them incomprehensible and strangely remote, for when I spoke of the Calcutta

massacres they would believe none of it. It seemed to me that dead bodies could not be disbelieved. Jinnah, in particular, striding up and down the marble floor of his palace in Bombay, cursing the Hindus as though I were a public audience, swore blindly that he had never in his life approved of so heinous a thing as a massacre. Nehru, too, seemed to have no thought that massacres were to be taken account of. But if India was to fall into the same simple error which arises from the fact that there are men in the world who believe massacres are good for the soul, the catastrophe about to fall on China seemed of far greater moment. Whitehall asked for a report on the Chinese Communists. I wrote that they had altogether, including their militia, at least two million men under arms. For "two million" the military adviser on Chinese affairs substituted "some thousands." I am afraid I was angry. Later I wrote a book, largely about the Chinese Communists, called *China Awake*, which nobody read. And when the Chinese Communists swept Chiang Kai-shek out of the Chinese mainland, I felt that England and America were largely to blame.

I have made this introduction because I do not believe in "objectivity." Every observer or writer worth his salt has prejudices and associations and desires, and mine were formed in the roads of Bali, Malaya, Burma, Java, India, and China, and something was added to them in recent visits to Persia and Iraq. In order that you may judge what these things are to me, I have tried to give you this brief sketch of the person who wandered to the East, for the prejudices were very strong and they were concerned with the students, the peasants, and the soldiers, who between them constitute some 90 per cent of the Asiatic population.

ROBERT PAYNE





## RED STORM OVER ASIA



# I

## Red Storm Over Asia

The woods are burning, boy; there's a big fire going on all around.

—ARTHUR MILLER, *The Death of a Salesman*

FOR the space of two years Asia has been going steadily in the direction of Communism. There have been setbacks, but the march of Communism still continues, and it may even derive strength from its defeats. Two years ago there were signs that Communism was retreating in every Asiatic country except China. In the summer of 1950 only a miracle prevented the west coast of India from going Communist, and in all the countries on the periphery of the Soviet Union Communism became more deeply entrenched, more violent, more assured of its own strength—so assured, indeed, that the Communists of North Korea embarked upon an adventure which was ill advised from the beginning, for the spoils of conquest were incomparably small in comparison with the risks involved.

Why has it happened that in the space of two years Communism, which once seemed to be a dying force among the renascent nations of Asia, should have shown such remarkable energy?

When in the summer of 1945 the nations of Asia found themselves for the first time in a position to throw off the burdens of colonialism, the main strength of the Asiatic peoples was directed toward acquiring freedom from all ties with the West. It was assumed that the Asiatic political parties were all essentially nationalist; and if the leaders for the most part were socialists, it was not

because they were socialists that they were brought to power. Their socialism was an extension of their nationalism: the land with all its resources would belong to the people. The habits of socialism fitted well with the revolutionary movements which sprang up all over Asia, but it was a socialism of the center rather than a socialism of the left. Men like Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohammed Hatta, and Aung San were socialists only in the sense that they foresaw that in nations so overpopulated and so lacking in necessities, a strong central government with overriding powers to plan the economy of the nation would inevitably have to be established. In 1945 neither Ho Chi-minh nor Mao Tse-tung spoke in the voices of rabid revolutionaries: they were still dedicated to acquiring or retaining their power by peaceful means. They may not have meant what they said, but it was significant that they spoke so temperately. Those were the days when the revolution resembled a slow fuse; the first real explosions occurred in 1947 and 1948.

The revolt of Asia began, on the whole, slowly and cautiously. The Communists were not a force to be reckoned with outside China, because the nationalists had stolen their thunder and because most of the Communist parties had lost whatever prestige they once possessed by cooperating with the colonial powers against a common enemy. But once the influence of the colonial powers began to be withdrawn, there was a vacuum, the Communists attempted to regain, and sometimes succeeded in regaining, their former authority, and there followed a sharp struggle between the Communists and Socialists for power. Asia was left without a moral code. The old religions, the old customary laws, the old feudalism, the carefully endowed pretexts by which certain castes were allowed to rule, all these became suspect. It was not that the revolutionaries had overthrown the past, for the past remained, the old traditions giving color to the revolutionary movements, but the absence of any defined principles or any certain aim once their independence was established allowed gravitation toward a state where there were no principles. An almost nihilistic opportunism became inevitable in all the countries where a moderate "third force" either failed to take power or found itself with no means of exerting its power. The countries which had felt the pressure of colonialism most severely became the most anarchistic. If the massacres in the communal disputes in India

## RED STORM OVER ASIA

did not arise solely as the result of the peculiar social system which the British had imposed on India, at least they arose partly as the consequence of Great Britain's failure to impose a moral code applicable to the conquerors and the conquered alike. In Korea and Burma the long history of postwar violence had its origins in the violent traditions of the past, but the violence we have known in recent history springs very largely from the explosion which occurs when colonialism is removed. The Burmese, trained to an acquiescent Buddhism, and the Koreans, trained in Shintoism, were violent in the same way and for the same reasons: they possessed no aims, no certain direction, no mythology, no code by which the relations between individuals could be ruled. As a consequence, their pent-up energies exploded very often into a savage nihilism. Since no one was traditionally empowered to rule, everyone could rule. Since no one was entitled to wealth, everyone was entitled to wealth. Since the old laws were clearly in abeyance, everyone was entitled to do as he pleased.

It was not, of course, quite as simple as that. The strong ruled, and the group rather than the individual exerted its authority. Splinter parties were formed. Guerrilla forces ravaged the country. In Indonesia, for example, there were seven different kinds of guerrilla forces operating in the winter of 1945. In Burma there were eight armies fighting the government in 1949. The threat of a violent breakdown of governmental machinery existed in all the countries of the East from Lebanon to the Celebes. In some countries the whole machinery of government either broke down completely or hung by a thread, and the shock of the breakdown remained long after the governments were established in power, so that they became wary of local autonomous movements and suppressed uprisings with the kind of cruelty which was previously employed by their conquerors. With no ties to replace the alien power, ruled over by leaders who were often surprisingly ignorant of the economic and social forces which interlace a modern state, at the mercy of tensions which had previously been concealed by the domination of a foreign culture and a foreign army, and without the means of feeding the vast populations over which they ruled, the governments which had elected themselves into power were often in fact powerless, even when their propaganda proclaimed them as being most

powerful. The Western colonial powers had fostered complicated economic organizations, but with the proclamation of the revolution in one after another of the Asiatic countries, a purely village economy alone remained; and it was on the foundations of the village economies of Asia that the new states would have to be built, for the hurricane which had swept governments and armies aside left the villages, with their laws, their customs, and their privileges, virtually untouched. Sun Yat-sen had stated that the basic unit of administration in Asia was the *hsien*, or county: in fact the basic unit had been found to be considerably smaller.

In the early days of the Asiatic revolt, a tragic splendor lit up the nightmarish scene. The freedom from colonialism, which the Asiatics desired above everything else, seemed almost unobtainable. In Tonkin there came an invasion of Yunnanese troops under General Lu Han, who despoiled the country, wrecked the machinery of government which Ho Chih-minh was trying to introduce, and ordered that whole areas of rice land should grow poppies. They possessed modern weapons and imposed their law on the country until the French returned in strength. Against the second invasion the people of Indochina revolted as firmly as the Tonkinese revolted against the Chinese. There were British and American troops at early stages of the reoccupation. In Indochina there were British and Dutch troops, while in Burma there were almost no troops at all, but the factions were arming. To many of the Asiatics it seemed that colonialism was about to be imposed by force of arms; and even when it became clear that the West had completed its course of intervention in Asia when Britain fulfilled her pledge of withdrawal from India, vestiges of colonialism remained, all the more bitter because they were so often disguised.

At the end of the war the Asiatics were crying out for a moral code and a sense of direction. The reimposition of colonial rule, in the countries where it occurred, offered neither a morality nor a direction to be pursued; it would be fought tenaciously, at all costs, and if necessary, as the Balinese fought the Dutch in 1908, by mass suicide. Both the code and the sense of direction could have been provided by America, but the Americans were strangely silent, unconscious of their moral power at this stage in the world's history and perhaps ignorant of their responsibilities. By one of the more

ironical turns of history, it was left to a young and brilliant Sumatran lawyer, born among the Menankabau tribes, where a perpetual matriarchy rules, to state the case of the West in Asia. Soetan Sjahrir's book *Indonesia's Fight*, written during the excitement of the early stages of the revolution, was in itself a considerable moral achievement. At the time it was written, nothing would have been easier than to inflame the Indonesian masses, who saw themselves attacked by Dutch soldiers and dive-bombing planes. Instead, he spoke of moral laws and suggested the direction to be pursued, outlining the valid course of the revolution. *Indonesia's Fight* should be quoted at some length, for what Sjahrir was attempting to describe was a revolution which applied to the whole of Asia:

I intend to place before you certain matters that are thought to be of essential importance to our present struggle. I intend to present them calmly and objectively; and because our struggle affects the livelihood and fate of millions of people, it must be considered as a whole. The problem of guiding a people politically is clearly a matter of reason, and not of one's own private wishes.

We know now that it is the general desire of all classes of our people to keep and protect our independence. Never before has the desire for independence reached such a peak as today. Especially among the young it is clear that their whole lives revolve around the idea of independence; and sooner or later even the masses in the towns and the villages will be compelled to join in the struggle. The common people will inevitably be drawn into the conflict, and for them it is clear that the slogan *Merdeka* (Freedom) does not mean only a sovereign Indonesia, nor does the red and white flag mean to them only a symbol of the unity and ideals of our race and country; to them it means especially freedom itself—freedom from tyranny, hunger, and oppression, and the red and white flag means for them the struggle for democracy.

During those three and a half years of domination by Japan, the fundamentals of our life in the villages were turned upside down by forced labor, by bribing the villagers to become slave workers, by putting them in uniform to fight with the Japanese, by seizures of harvest, forced labor in the fields, and indescribable tyrannies. There came to this country a reign of uncertainty and tyranny, causing wide unrest. Thousands lost their jobs. Tens of thousands of peasants ran to the towns to avoid starvation and forced exactions. Disturbances increased and inevitably continued over into the time when the Japanese were compelled to surrender. . . .

When at last Japanese power weakened, nothing was done to introduce a strong government here; the country appeared to have no rulers; the untutored peasants had no idea how they would rule themselves, because they had never received a political education. The confusion increased. The killing of foreigners, murder, and arson can be understood in the light of the political condition of the people, for they inevitably proved the weakness of the Indonesian Republic, which could not yet acquire the respect of the people. The medicine to remedy all problems was thought to be action, till action itself became a drug on the market. . . .

We cannot compare our revolution with the French revolution. We live in a world that knows the power of the atomic bomb and possesses technical knowledge, resources, and industrial methods on a scale that cannot be compared with anything that has gone before. Our age is familiar with trust and cartel, telegraph, radio, factories, heavy industries: there was neither capitalism nor real imperialism at the time of the French revolution. Also, the structure of French society was altogether different from the structure of Indonesian society. . . .

The Indonesian Republic is an instrument of the democratic revolution. All laws that are not yet perfectly democratic must be made so; and we must prove that the essence of our country's belief is that our people shall have freedom of thought, speech, religion, writing, choice of livelihood and education, and that all governing bodies shall be elected by popular vote. And as quickly as possible the whole government must be democratized. . . . All laws and rights of citizens must be drawn up democratically, with humanity and socialism. . . .

Because ultimately all nations must form one humanity embracing the whole world, becoming one race—the whole human race living in one society based on justice and truth—we must no longer be ruled by the narrow prejudice that divides human beings into different strata according to the color of their skins, or by differing traditions and inheritances. In the end these narrow feelings must cease to influence our lives. Once free of these bonds forged in a raw period of our evolution, we shall know that there is a vast difference between loving the land of our birth and hating foreigners. . . .

People are altogether wrong if they imagine that the young men in the army, or our military leaders, will lead our political revolution. This misunderstanding can be understood—in recent years we have had altogether too much experience of military power. Our military education has suggested to too many people that our fight for independence relies on military power, but our youth must never be influenced by feudal or fascist militarism. Knowledge, still lacking in all spheres, must be increased. Let



men learn to become revolutionary, not military leaders, idealistic, possessing the consciousness and the knowledge necessary for them to be clear that they are fighting also for the rest of humanity.

What is astonishing is not that Sjahrir should have spoken with the accents of the humanist West, but that he should have been able to convince his listeners that there was considerable virtue in the Western tradition at a time when the West, departing from its moral purposes, was trying to break the Indonesian revolution. The revolutionaries in Indonesia demanded a mythology, the wilder and more improbable the better; Sjahrir gave them reason, calm, a careful evaluation of the forces at work. They demanded exuberance; he gave them moderation. They demanded guns; he suggested they should consult social statistics. He spoke with fire and urgency, but what he said was the result of a scholarly analysis of the situation and the knowledge that the revolution was approaching the nihilist abyss. Five years later, when Mohammed Hatta broadcast an appeal to all the islands of the Indies to embrace the Unified State of Indonesia, there was the same cautious appeal to reason, the same awareness of the nihilist chaos which lay close to the surface.

The significance of Sjahrir's premiership during the early years of the Indonesian revolt has never been sufficiently realized. Great men were thrown up by the Asiatic revolution, but there is a sense in which he was the greatest. Soekarno, Nehru, Mao Tse-tung, Aung San, Ho Chih-minh all in their different ways climbed to power on a wave of legends: there was some inner fire in them which warmed the people, who saw in these legendary heroes "the shape of the father." There were times when their heroes seemed to possess no real existence, when they became hysterical projections of what the people believed them to be. They were men of furious rages, obsessed with their own power, careless of the suffering and bloodshed around them. Sjahrir belonged to an entirely different order of revolutionaries. He was attempting to introduce a reasonable revolution with a minimum of bloodshed<sup>1</sup> and a minimum of social dislocation,

<sup>1</sup> How bloody a revolution may be can be seen from the Chinese Communist claim that in the four years ending June 30, 1950, the Red Army "annihilated" 8,070,000 Kuomintang troops. Even if the figure, which does not include civilian casualties or the losses of the Red Army itself, is exaggerated, it demonstrates the appalling responsibilities of the Communist and Kuomintang leaders.

a revolution without mythology. He would have nothing to do with "rancor doctrines." "We absolutely deny that our movement springs from rancor," he said. "Without hatred, without resentment, but as keen as ever, and with no less passion, do we stand in this struggle for principles and values that in the long run determine the sense of human life."

A blind hatred of Western tradition informed too many oriental revolutionaries. It was a dangerous hatred, for it was often self-consuming. Being blinded, they tended not to see the fundamental spiritual and physical resources of the West. Sjahrir was concerned that those fundamental resources should be respected, and he could see no hope of accomplishing the revolution unless there was a kind of marriage between the philosophies of East and West. The contradictions were everywhere, and they could only be resolved by "a widening of the mental horizon, by which the struggle could be fought against the background of the universality of the values." The marriage would have to take place, but it could take place only in those areas where the moral principles of East and West coincided. In an article of quite extraordinary importance for an understanding of the "reasonable revolution," he explains why it was that so many Asiatics failed to come to terms with the West: they failed largely because they had not understood the motives which inspired the West. He continued:

In penetrating deeper and being made more receptive to the overwhelming riches of the Western mind, they regained their inner certainty. They allowed themselves to be influenced by those elements of culture which could be fertilizing and developing, to form free and harmonious personalities. And at the same time they realized that it also belonged to the Western tasks to conform to standards of truth, beauty, and goodness. These were the same ideas which had already been proclaimed for ages by the prophetic figures of the East, though differently formulated and applied.

The West itself has also been in a process of revision and purification for a long time. Among themselves they knew that the application of knowledge and technique could have fatal results, if at the same time moral standards were allowed to be overthrown. The chaotic condition existing among the world powers, with all that it implies (annihilation by the atomic bomb), arises from man's self-doubt and from the lack of inner moral resistance.

The essential task of the modern man today, whether he comes from the East or the West, is to rescue himself from this abyss by endeavoring to fix again his known position, and reestablish his absolute presence, his destination in the cosmos. In all this he must be led by standards of truth, beauty, and kindness, which form together components of human dignity.

These universal values are today no monopoly of the East or of the West: these are the tasks of fundamental man, and are valid whether he considers he is obeying the orders of the Almighty, or whether he considers man as a being finding his center in himself.

In all this we keenly experience and are fully aware that the realization and maintenance of human dignity are not possible within the space of servility and submission of one people to another; for there is no human dignity without freedom to determine one's fate.

Hence our fierce resistance against all that hampers and hinders our freedom and our strong will, and hence our determination to form the new society we have in view.

So we resisted, not primarily because we were driven by hatred, resentment, or aversion to foreigners, but because we consider freedom as a *conditio sine qua non*, without which it is impossible for us to be ourselves, to form ourselves and our community.

Freedom is the condition for human dignity. But freedom and human dignity are ideas that remain sterile if they do not find concretion and application in the society in which we live.<sup>2</sup>

Sjahrir's analysis of the methods of the Indonesian revolution, explained at length in a series of articles, books, and speeches, continually hammers on the same themes. He remains the socialist, believing that there should be a planned economy "because it is only in the atmosphere of socialism that a just distribution of the social product is conceivable, so fulfilling the demands of human dignity." He will have nothing to do with a society in which the rich rule merely because they are rich, nor does he believe that anyone has the right to be poor. In the main the revolution he envisages is essentially a product of the American and French revolutions, with one great difference: it is, or should be, a conscious revolution, with deliberate aims and with safeguards against the emergence of military leaders as dictators.

<sup>2</sup> *The Voice of Free Indonesia*, May, 1946, in an article called "Our Nationalism and Its Substance: Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity." The article is signed "S," but Sjahrir has since admitted his authorship.

The general plan of the Indonesian revolution as Sjahrir saw it can now be stated. The element to be preserved is human dignity, with its inevitable consequences. There cannot be rule by secret police. The rituals of confession which the Russians call "cleansings" and the Chinese Communists call "brain clearings" are forbidden, because they are essentially useless, dangerous, and against the concept of human dignity. There is a strong centralized state, but the legal basis of government derives from free elections and the secret ballot. The ultimate unit of government is the human individual, not the party or the trade union. Freedom against the interference of the West is assumed as axiomatic once the war of liberation is over. The "reasonable revolution" by definition is prepared to accept all the social advances of the West, and determinedly sets its face against appeals to mythology and "the shape of the father," that brooding image which haunts the Russians to the detriment of any clear thinking. The revolution is seen to be part of a world revolution, but in no sense is this world revolution seen to be anything so childishly simple as the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revolutionary government is constantly aware of the dangers of anarchy, of the complete breakdown of social institutions. Sjahrir envisages an economy formed of a balance between socialism and private capitalism. There is the right to a free education, the right to strike, the right and duty to worship. Extremist and wildly idealistic solutions are not to be countenanced, "for we are dealing with the most important matter there is, which is the human individual, and we must never forget the existence of the gulf between subject and object."

Sjahrir's blueprint for the "reasonable revolution" is a document which should be read carefully by those who are interested in the Asiatic revolt, for if the Chinese Communist revolution was the most unquestionably successful of recent revolutions in Asia, it was so only because it annihilated all opposition by force of arms. Sjahrir's task was more difficult. He saw that the revolution did not necessarily demand bloodshed; that the enemy could be made to retreat by an appeal to world opinion; that fanaticism offered hostages to fortune; that in the last instance there could be no real revolution at all if a blind hostility to the West was maintained. The revolutionaries in Asia, like the Japanese in 1905, had shattered the legend of Western military supremacy, but for a long time to come the West would

possess a social superiority: it was the West which contrived during the long course of its history to bring about conceptions of law, order, economic security, and freedom from disease, and from the West, too, there came the theoretical justification of the state as guarantor of the welfare of each individual in it.

Sjahrir's ideas were not Sjahrir's alone. In varying degrees the pattern outlined by Sjahrir occurred to other revolutionary leaders. There are moments when Mao Tse-tung, forgetting the hard core of an authoritarian doctrine, speaks with the same humanist voice derived from the years when he studied the writings of the Chinese reformers, Liang Chi-chao and Kang Yu-wei. Thakin Nu, the Burmese premier, speaks often in the same tones. Nehru's essential humanism has been celebrated in the books he wrote in prison. Ho Chih-minh, writing his careful poems in the uplands of Tonkin, spoke in the early days of the Indochinese revolt with the same authentic voice, quoting from the American Declaration of Independence, as, indeed, all the revolutionary leaders of southeast Asia did. But it is essential to note that the "reasonable revolution" had nothing in common with the revolution as it was understood in Moscow.

The red storm first broke over Asia when the Congress of the Peoples of the Orient was inaugurated on September 1, 1919, at Baku, the capital of Russian Azerbaijan. The first meeting of the Comintern had taken place in March, 1918. There, very little had been accomplished, though a manifesto had been issued to the proletariat of the world pledging the allegiance of its members to the *Communist Manifesto* first published seventy-two years before. At the second Congress, which met in July, 1919, at a time when the Red Army was rapidly approaching the gates of Warsaw, it began to seem possible that the Red Army would sweep across Europe while at the same time it was sweeping across Siberia. An illimitable hope buoyed up the members of the Congress, who gathered before the maps which Zinoviev carefully prepared outside the conference hall, the little red flags showing the ever advancing lines of the Red Army. Karakhan had been sending his strange messages to Chang Tso-lin, the dictator of North China, explaining that Lenin was sending the Red Army to the frontiers of China itself, and would the Government of China "enter without delay into official relations

with us and send its representatives to meet our army." He declared null and void all the secret treaties previously signed between the two governments. He stated that the Soviet Government forsook its share of the Boxer Indemnity Fund, all its special privileges, all forests, mines, and gold seized by Russian generals, merchants, and capitalists, and returned without indemnification the Chinese-Eastern Railway. The message was entrusted to the Red Army then making its way across the Urals in the first large-scale maneuver which was to bring it to the shores of the Pacific, and though the spirit of the message was pacific enough, there were concealed threats. There were to be concealed threats in all the messages sent by Karakhan to the Far East.

The Congress of the Peoples of the Orient took place in a mood of profound rejoicing and messianic promises. The red dawn was about to shine; and Zinoviev, who loved the phrase "the red dawn," was in his element as he addressed the 2,000 delegates hastily assembled.<sup>3</sup> They were not, except in very rare circumstances, peoples of the Orient. Half the delegates were from the Soviet areas bordering on the Near East. Most of the other delegates came from Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkey. Nearly all the delegates were Moslems. Characteristically, therefore, and with a profound lack of knowledge of Near Eastern habits of thought, Zinoviev called for a jihad, a holy war of the exploited masses of the East against the oppressions of foreign rule:

The real revolution will blaze up only when the 800,000,000 people who live in Asia unite with us, when the African continent unites, when we see that hundreds of millions of people are in movement. Now we must kindle a real holy war against the British and French capitalists . . . We may say that the hour has struck when the workers of the whole world are able to arouse tens and hundreds of millions of peasants, to create a Red Army in the East, to arm and organize uprisings in the rear

<sup>3</sup> According to the stenographic report of the conference, there were 235 Turks, 192 Persians, 157 Armenians, 14 Hindus, and 8 Chinese. There were said to be altogether 1,891 delegates representing thirty-two national groups. The predominance of Turks and Persians may be accounted for by the fact that the Soviet Government was hoping to establish soviets in the border areas of these countries.

of the British, to poison the existence of every impudent British officer who lords it over Turkey, Persia, India, China.<sup>4</sup>

Zinoviev also said, "We will find the right path to victory only when the hearts of millions of suppressed people in the world open to the pure words of the truth." The delegates roared their approval, waved their sabers and knives, and then sat down quietly on their benches, chewing melon seeds, while Radek and Béla Kun and John Reed and Ostrovsky, who had organized the conference, addressed them in turn. John Reed cursed Uncle Sam, who "has a sack of hay in one hand and a whip in the other"—it was a charge which was to be repeated whenever the United States performed any act of reparation or reconstruction. Radek invoked the legends of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, and declared that for too long the oppressed races under capitalism had given way to a patient pacifism. It was time to strike. He said:

We appeal, comrades, to the spirit of struggle which once animated the peoples of the East when they marched against Europe under the leadership of their great conquerors. And when the capitalists of Europe say that there is the menace of a new wave of barbarism, a new wave of Huns, we reply: Long live the Red East, which, together with the workers of Europe, will create a new culture under the banner of communism.<sup>5</sup>

It was all stated in simple terms like these, and yet it was—it must have been—wholly confusing to the audience which listened patiently and wondered how much of it was dream and how much of it was practical possibility. When Zinoviev spoke of "the pure words of the truth," he was doing no more than announcing the infantile disease of Communism: the "only truth" of the Communists found itself confronted with the many truths of the different races at the conference. The appeal to a holy war led nowhere: the resurrection of the ghosts of Tamerlane and Genghis Khan led nowhere: it was as though Radek, Zinoviev, and Ostrovsky were speaking above the

<sup>4</sup> William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935), II, pp. 392-393. Copyright, 1935, by The Macmillan Company.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* II, 393.

heads of their listeners to an audience far beyond Turkey, Afghanistan, and Persia. Thirty years after the conference the words would have had a greater appeal. A screen of Mohammedans stood in front of the Communists, and it was only when they had pierced this screen that their message would reach the heart of Asia. In the end there was too much similarity in the methods of their doctrines between the Communists and the Mohammedans to make success in this direction possible. By 1950 Communism had still not penetrated deeply in Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan, while in the countries farthest from Moscow, where there was a greater ignorance of Communist practices in Russia, the headway was greatest.

But the conference was in no sense a failure. Symbolically, the choice of Baku was superb, for it had been captured by the British in September, 1918, and there had occurred the celebrated incident of the death of twenty-six commissars: Baku represented the territory reclaimed from the capitalists. Also, it was well placed strategically, a little tongue of land looking down on Persia and the deserts of Asia.

Though some of the delegates protested openly against the cruelties and oppressions of the Soviet régime, the conference did establish certain themes which were to be repeated constantly in the years to come. A resolution on the agrarian question, demanding the abolition of the large estates without compensation, was passed, but not unanimously. Another resolution abolished all feudal principles. Among the delegates was Enver Pasha, later to be executed by the Bolsheviks. He seems to have realized that the Communists were more interested in protecting themselves than in offering solutions to the revolutionary East. At one point, when Zinoviev asked him whether he understood what a Communist was, Enver Pasha answered, "Anyone who is an enemy of England."

"What do you think about the Bolsheviks fighting against the capitalists and the landlords?" Zinoviev then asked.

"That is a matter in which the Turks are not interested," Enver Pasha replied.

It became clear that the delegates invited from outside the Soviet Union retained their reservations on all points outlined in Zinoviev's speeches. At the conclusion of the conference a Council for Propa-



ganda and Action of the Eastern People was formed. It was to consist of forty-three members and to meet at Baku once every three months. After a few meetings nothing was ever heard of it again.

But if the Baku conference produced no immediate results, unwittingly the Communists had stumbled upon one elementary truth. They regarded Asia as a whole: their appeals were made to Asia as a whole, even though the delegates to the conferences came for the most part from the Near East. The West consistently failed to look at Asia as a whole, failing to realize that nearly every Asiatic village suffered from the same social sicknesses and rejoiced in the same triumphs. Meanwhile Zinoviev had made two mistakes: he had called for a holy war without realizing that such wars demand moral sanctions, and he had addressed himself mainly to representatives of the Near East, where a ferocious feudalism was in power; and such feudalisms are not removed by brave speeches.

Zinoviev's speeches on the revolutionary awakening of Asia were followed later by even more romantic speeches by Bukharin, but though they were extraordinarily far removed from practical politics, they possessed a basis in strategy. Lenin had declared in his closing speech at the Second Congress the inevitability of "a conflagration between the counterrevolutionary and imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, that is, between the most civilized states in the world and the backward states in the Orient, which must have time to civilize themselves." Whether he really believed that the conflict was inevitable has never been discovered, but it was clear that he regarded the Asiatic states as natural allies, and he found much in common between czarist Russia and the despotic feudal states in the East. He had written a "Manifesto to the East" shortly after coming to power, but that wordy document sounded more like a cry of helplessness than an invitation to action in spite of its messianic phrases. The turning point was Baku. Thereafter, there would be continuing emphasis on the East. And when Zinoviev, after his triumphal week in Baku, made his whirlwind tour of Germany shortly afterward, the nature of the revolution which the Communists desired in the East was made plain. In October, 1920, in an address to the Independent Party in Halle, Zinoviev stressed the new importance to be attached to Asia. He said:

If Marx once said that a European revolution without England would be merely a tempest in a teacup, then we will tell you, German comrades, that a proletarian revolution without Asia will not be a world revolution. . . . At the Baku congress we discovered the element that in the past was missing in the proletarian movement. We discovered what is essential to the realization of world revolution. The oppressed masses of Asia must awaken. . . . I must make a confession: when in Baku I beheld hundreds of Persians and Turks join us in singing "The Internationale" I felt my eyes fill with tears and I recognized the breathing of the world revolution. Yes, I stress it, not merely the European, but the world revolution. We have here the rising of all the oppressed peoples of the world against capitalism.\*

Unfortunately for the Communists, for many years they were to see small groups of people singing "The Internationale" and imagine that they heard "the breathing of the world revolution." All through the story of Russian Communist efforts to cajole the East into a revolutionary fervor, there is the same belief in small signs and wonders prophesying the downfall of empires.

The Comintern never succeeded in lighting the fuse which would set Asia alight, but it possessed weapons which the West never used and never attempted to use. Zinoviev and Bukharin especially possessed an uncommon belief in their visions. They incessantly wrote manifestoes and insisted that they were not writing manifestoes at all, but statements of dry fact. They were bewitched by their own propaganda, but they knew how to talk in a way which would be convincing to some oriental minds. Huge Brocken shadows arose. Communism lay over the whole length of Asia. China roared. The capitalists were within an inch of doom, and the Red Armies were within an inch of conquering the whole world. "We, the U.S.S.R., are the watchdog of the whole world," Bukharin declaimed. "Our vision extends over thousands of years. We are not living an existence on paper, in a manifesto, nor in the dreamlands of great minds and hearts. We are the glorious vanguard of the workers who are changing the world, a grim army preparing for fresh battles. We are the triumphant driving force of world history. On the topmost ranges

\* Michael T. Florinsky, *World Revolution and the U.S.S.R.* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 61. Copyright, 1933, by The Macmillan Company.

of human will and action we build and struggle, suffer and triumph. Our responsibility before history is tremendous." It was a strange witch's brew, compounded of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Marx, and not a little of that passion for repetition which characterizes those who have nothing to say, but it was, as Bukharin knew, supremely dangerous. It would not succeed at once. In the end, by force of repetition, it would break through.

For the Comintern world revolution meant a Communist Europe and a Communist Asia. They were two separate revolutions, to be brought about by separate means, but in their passion for uniformity the delegates of the Comintern refused to recognize any fundamental differences. They applied the same formulas to Europe that they applied to Asia. At the time of Brest-Litovsk, Lenin, as Zinoviev admitted at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, felt certain that all the countries of Europe would fall into Communist hands "within a few weeks, or at most a few months." In the winter of 1926 Bukharin was still speaking in the same weary tones of a victory which was no nearer to being realized. He declared: "They say we have been deceived because the international revolution has not come about: they say we should bow down to hard necessity and cease to be what we have been up to now. We reply that the international revolution will not only come, but is already a fact. . . . Of course, it has stopped in some directions, but it is already resumed in others. The world revolution will be at the end of its course when it has triumphed in all countries." The repetition of *non sequiturs* and tautologies could not go on for ever. At the Sixth Congress, held in July and August, 1928, after the defeat of the Chinese Communists, an effort was made to grapple with the problem on less visionary levels. There had been no Congress since 1924. During the interval Trotsky had been drummed out of the party, "socialism in one country" had been announced, and the Communist parties all over the world were seething as a result of ill advised interference from Moscow. What should be done?

The resolutions of the Sixth Congress are written in the same style as the previous resolutions. Nearly every statement introduces an "inevitably" or an "of course." The Communist party is described in the usual superlatives, the pages so thick with them that it becomes impossible not to feel that they conceal an inner doubt, a sense of

apprehension.<sup>7</sup> There are six main divisions in the program as it was finally written by Stalin and Bukharin. The first, called "The World System of Capitalism: Its Development and Inevitable Downfall," deals with the familiar theory that capitalism contains the seeds of its own degeneration, which would suggest that nothing need be done except await its demise. The second describes some phases in the decline of capitalism and goes on to define the first phase of the world revolution; the third contains a messianic vision of the world as it will be under international Communism, the state having dissolved itself completely and everybody working under the slogan: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." It is with the fourth division, entitled "The Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," that the report begins to grapple with the problems of strategy and organization. The conclusions are extremely simple, but their implications are heavy with significance. The dictatorship of the proletariat is still enforced, but the methods by which the proletariat should gain power are explained at some length, and for the first time there appears the urgent demand that the proletariat in some countries must align themselves with the "poor" and "middle peasants." These conclusions follow the failure of Li Li-san's effort to bring about the proletarian revolution in China. The village co-operative societies are now given an importance second only to the labor unions. It is admitted, however, that the proletarian revolution will take place only slowly, after a long interval of years, and as the result of "frightful convulsions." Strangely enough, the United States, Germany, and Great Britain are regarded as countries ripe for Communism; these are followed by the "half-capitalist" states of Poland, Portugal, Hungary, and the Balkan States, while the "colonial and semicolonial" countries, India and China, are not regarded

<sup>7</sup> The "all-language" of the Soviets demands careful analysis. The reasons for its use are probably not as simple as they appear to be, and different layers of confusion are involved. Unfortunately, this language is contagious. Miss Virginia Thompson, for example, together with Richard Adloff, writing a generally excellent study, *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia*, falls into the trap. She says on page 225: "Everywhere but in Thailand it was the Communist Party that was the best organized, and disciplined, the most politically conscious, and the most active element among the anti-Japanese forces." The Communist parties in these areas had proclaimed themselves as superlatively conscious, organized, disciplined, and active, but it does not necessarily follow that they were.

as being ripe, a view which probably reflects the defeat of the Communists in Indonesia and China the previous year. The fifth division of the program, called "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the International Social Revolution," contains surprisingly little about the international social revolution, perhaps because social revolutions do not generally occur on international planes. It is largely devoted to a paean in praise of Soviet successes, and once again there is the often repeated charge that Russia is being surrounded by capitalist states whose only desire is to strangle her. The last, and most important, as it is the most virulent, of the theses is entitled "The Strategy and Tactics of the Communist International in the Struggle for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Here there is to be observed the cutting edge of Soviet strategy, for the strategy finally adopted is one of uncompromising hostility to all movements that do not acknowledge the leadership of the Communist party and the deliberate adoption of a policy of civil war wherever and whenever these can be brought about. The formidable power of the bourgeoisie can be broken only by war. The peasants and the proletariat must combine against the bourgeoisie and destroy them:

In the coming imperialist war the boundary between battle front and rear will tend more and more to be obliterated. Reaction at home will be intensified, side by side with armaments. . . . Alliances and pacts under the auspices of the League of Nations are means of camouflaging war preparations against the Soviet Union and the Chinese revolution. Only through the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in the most imperialist countries can imperialist war be prevented.

War is inseparable from capitalism. From this it follows that the abolition of war is possible only through abolition of capitalism, which, in turn, is impossible without armed uprisings and proletarian wars against the bourgeoisie.

The thesis, as thus stated, was simple enough. Not capitalism, but Communism, was showing itself inseparable from war. In every conceivable manner uprisings were to be brought about: and if the theory of the class struggle was inadequate to suggest the *reasons* for the struggle, there was always the mythology of Communism as "the only defender of the oppressed." Just as the nihilist Nechayev was prepared to bring about the destruction of the Czarist Empire, and drew up no blueprints for the social organization which would

follow, so the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, concerned with its world-wide failure, urged revolution everywhere and had not the least idea how it should be brought about. The long report is an angry document, full of a strained, impassioned pleading for what must have appeared at that time to be a lost cause. An intolerable violence lurks beneath the rumbling sentences. "The state," said Lenin in 1917, "is an institution built up for the sake of instituting violence."<sup>8</sup> The Comintern was now dedicated to the employment of violence on an international scale.

In spite of all the arguments concerning the "inevitability" of the class struggle and the "final decline" of the bourgeoisie, the famous Sixth Congress did not outline a clear program. It called for uprisings, not because these were necessary in the historical development of the countries concerned, but in order that the Soviet Union should be protected by a rim of countries possessed by a fighting Communist party. Because everything was "inevitable," nothing was certain; and in effect the doctrines of the Sixth Congress corresponded to a wild flailing of the arms and an admission of weakness.

The admission of weakness had been continual since Stalin's rise to power; and nothing is so curious as the way in which that proud, intolerant man confesses continually that the Soviet Union must expand or perish. He does not, of course, confess this openly, but there are hints throughout his writings, strange repetitions of formulas gratuitously offered, and at least once he admitted that the Soviet Union could not survive unless there was a large and ever growing rim of Communist parties around its frontiers. "The contradictions between our country and the capitalist world cannot be solved by the strength of the Soviet Union alone," he confessed to the Fourteenth Party Conference in 1925. "Only the support of our revolution by the workers of all countries, *and possibly even by the victory of the workers in some countries*, can guarantee our country against an attempt at intervention." There is something almost plaintive in "possibly even by the victory of the workers in some countries." The same plaintive and dangerous cry is heard throughout the proceedings of the Sixth Congress three years later, for, deprived of the huge verbiage of the final report, the conclusions were, "Hit

<sup>8</sup> David Shub, *Lenin* (New York, Doubleday & Co., 1948), p. 275.

hard, hit continually; we are in mortal danger and need your protection."

By 1928 the Comintern had suffered its greatest defeats. There had arisen the belief that skilled revolutionaries trained in Moscow would be able to act as revolutionary engineers anywhere in the world. Revolution had become, they thought, an exportable commodity. It was not quite so simple. The revolutionary blueprints made no distinctions between races. It was assumed that the revolution was there and had only to be brought to birth; the engineers of revolution could be regarded as midwives, and if there was to be a revolution in China, for example, Russian, German, and Indian midwives would be the most suitable. In fact, Borodin, Manendra Nath Roy, and a German who went under the name of Li Teh were the chief engineers of the failure of the Communist revolution in China in 1927; and the strange caucus of non-Chinese revolutionaries who were sent out to Wuhan to map the course of the revolution, a caucus which included Earl Browder, Jacques Doriot, and Pavel Miff, was hopelessly incompetent. They had studied revolution in school; they knew nothing of revolution in practice. A blind ignorance continued to inform the Kremlin strategy. In 1927 Manuilsky was proclaiming in Moscow that the Chinese Communists ruled over an area as large as Germany and France combined, though at the time he was speaking they ruled over a handful of Hunanese villages, and these were shortly afterward lost to them. Today Soviet commentators insist that every single program and every directive has been proved right by events; they have quoted from the orders issued to China, Java, and India, as though these orders possessed a prophetic force, but it is only by the jesuitical choice of stray sentences that they have been able to convince themselves of the correctness of their revolutionary policy. They made three errors: first, the summons to violence was never disguised and never given an understandable purpose; second, they had forgotten that nations are moved by national forces and that colonial nations cannot become revolutionary until they have acquired their independence; third, they believed that there were unchangeable laws which revolutions obeyed, when by definition all revolutions follow changing patterns. By 1930 the directives of the Comintern had become even

more violent, even more virulent, but the main outlines of the 1928 Congress remained unchanged.

Students of the Comintern, both inside and outside the Soviet Union, have discerned seven phases in the development of Comintern policy.<sup>9</sup> There were deviations, temporary setbacks, but there were no changes, nothing that corresponded to an identifiable phase in the development of the policy, except the doctrine of the "popular front," announced first in 1935 and resurrected whenever suitable circumstances arose, the most recent having occurred in India in June, 1950. Usually the doctrine of the "popular front" has arisen at moments when the anarchic violence of the Communists has strained popular belief in their effectiveness; there is a sudden atmosphere of compromise, promises to abjure violence, attempts to include progressive people of all kinds within the party organization. And though the measure is often successful, there is never any reason to believe in its permanence. Inevitably, by the very nature of the Communist dynamic, violence returns, and the moderates who were invited to join the party organization either leave the party or are killed.

Throughout its existence the task of the Comintern, and later of the Cominform, has been to engineer revolt. It has been dedicated to bringing about the kind of revolt envisaged by Marx in the *Communist Manifesto*, unfettered by practical considerations of politics. Its vision has been sweeping, and never more so than in its dealings with the Far East, where a succession of failures has only spurred it to commit still more mistakes. It was significant that the last words of the report on the Sixth Congress were a direct quotation from the *Communist Manifesto*:

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their goal can be obtained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble before the Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of all countries, unite!

But it would have been more accurate and more characteristic of the Comintern leaders if they had quoted another passage from the *Communist Manifesto*:

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Martin Ebon, *World Communism Today* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1948), pp. 15-26.



Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, two great classes directly facing each other, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat: the other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry. The proletariat is the unselfconscious independent movement of the immense majority.

There, by implication, is stated the task of the Comintern: to be the agent by which the split may be brought about.

Almost from its inception, the Comintern was concerned deeply with the revolutionary tide of the East. Unfortunately, however, the *Communist Manifesto* was peculiarly lacking in guidance. The proletariat, as "the unselfconscious independent movement of the immense majority," possesses no existence in the East, nor could an oriental peasant understand why the other classes, which presumably include the peasantry, should "disappear in the face of modern industry." It was precisely because the theory of the proletarian leadership was so greatly insisted upon that the original Communist revolutions in the East failed. If the Communist revolution were to come at all, it would have to be harnessed to "the unselfconscious movement of the immense majority." These were the peasants. And though Li Li-san continued to proclaim from Moscow, even after he had been removed from the Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist party, that a Communist revolution could be brought about in China through uprisings in the industrial cities, these uprisings never took place. The successful movements of the East have all taken place among the peasants. In Telingana, Tonkin, the Philippines, and China the uprisings were led by men who had spent most of their lives among the peasants; these uprisings have possessed a quite extraordinary permanence. In Malaya, Azerbaijan, and Java the uprisings were led by professional revolutionaries who possessed no roots among the peasants, with the result that two of these uprisings have failed and the Malayan uprisings must inevitably fail.

But the greatest mistake committed by the Comintern lay in the province where mistakes were inexcusable. Believing that the world revolution would put an end to national frontiers, they refused to accept national differences of behavior. Between 1923 and 1927 the Chinese Communist party accepted the dominance of Moscow; it was not to accept that dominance again, and then only in regard to foreign affairs, until 1950. The reasons were clear, and they were

stated most succinctly by Mao Tse-tung in his book *Coalition Government*:

Some people wonder whether the Chinese Communists, when they have achieved power, will establish a dictatorship of the proletariat and a one-party system, as in Russia. We can tell these people this: a New Democratic state of a union of democratic classes is different *in principle* from a Soviet state with its dictatorship of the proletariat. Russian history determined the Soviet system. In the same way Chinese history will determine the Chinese system.

There were not only differences of principle; there were differences of policy and aims. In 1927 Mao Tse-tung had envisaged a revolution brought about by "the flaring anger of the poor peasants." Experience taught him that a revolution brought about by the poor peasants alone would result in chaotic violence; and when he came to power he spoke at length of the necessity of creating a "rich peasant economy," and of the need to protect the rich peasants from the antagonism of the self-elected soviets of the poor peasants. "The rich peasant must be preserved," he said on June 8, 1950, "for nothing matters so much as the restoration of production in the rural areas." It was as though Stalin were placing the kulaks under his personal protection.

But if agrarian reform was brought about with a careful regard for the realities of the situation, there were other directions in which that regard was lacking. Chinese Communists had come to power as the result of an armed uprising against a helplessly corrupt government; it was not to be expected that all Asiatic countries would develop Communism in the same way. But the Chinese Communists had no sooner come to power than they demanded armed uprisings in all the Asiatic nations. At the third of the great focal points in Asiatic Communism—the first occurred at Baku in 1919, the second at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928—Liu Shao-chi made a speech that may well count as one of the most significant utterances ever made by a Chinese Communist leader. At the Trade Union Conference of Asian and Australasian Countries, which concluded on December 1, 1949, he appealed quite simply for an armed struggle to be waged bitterly and without quarter against imperialism, and by implication against the Asiatic bourgeoisie. The confer-

ence was attended by 117 delegates from 13 countries, including China, the Soviet Union, Mongolia, Korea, India, Viet-Nam, Burma, Siam, Indonesia, Ceylon, the Philippines, Malaya, and Iran. All the delegates were Communists of varying degrees of bitterness and intensity. The Indian delegate, Shankar Shelwankar, can hardly have been correct when he stated that Pundit Nehru had thrown 25,000 Communists into Indian jails, though it is likely that there were more Communists in jail in India under Congress than there had ever been Congress members in jail under British domination. Ali Mardjono, the delegate from Indonesia, claimed that Wall Street had paid \$65,000,000 to suppress the Madioen uprising in September, 1948, a statement which was demonstrably absurd, since neither the Dutch nor the Americans were allowed any part in the suppression of Moeso's ill fated venture. Aung Win, the delegate from Burma, spoke yearningly of the time when Thakin Nu's government would have been completely destroyed. There were a large number of violent speeches, but the most violent came from Liu Shao-chi, who hurled down the gantlet and demanded immediate war.

This strange and important speech should be quoted at some length, because it has not achieved the attention it deserves. It is in effect a declaration of war and a statement of Chinese responsibilities in that war. At the conference Vicente Lombardo Toledano had spoken of Mao Tse-tung as "one to be placed side by side with Stalin." Now it became clear that the Chinese Communists were perfectly willing to accept their rôle as the leaders of Asiatic Communism. Liu Shao-chi first drew a picture of Asia suffering under the weight of furious imperialism, a picture which was almost wholly outdated, and then he went on to proclaim:

The colonies and the semi-colonies are the real bases of world imperialism, and this imperialism relies on the colonies for its existence. . . .

The war of national liberation in Viet-Nam has resulted in the liberation of 90% of her territory; the war of national liberation in Burma and Indonesia is now developing; the partisan warfare against imperialism and its lackeys in Malaya and the Philippines has been carried on over a long period; and armed struggles for emancipation have also taken place in India. . . .

These national liberation movements . . . will never stop short of complete victory. Their struggles are entirely righteous. They should and will

win victory. The great victory of the Chinese people has set them the best example.

The path which led the Chinese people to victory is set forth in the following formula:

This nationwide united front must be led by and built around the working class, which opposes imperialism most resolutely, most courageously and most unselfishly, and its party, the Communist Party, with the latter at its center. It must not be led by the wavering and compromising national bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie or other parties. . . .

*It is necessary to set up wherever possible a national army which is led by the Communist Party, and is powerful and skilful in fighting its enemies.*

*Armed struggle is the main form of struggle for the national liberation of many colonies and semi-colonies.<sup>10</sup>*

The speech is curiously unimpressive. All caution is thrown to the winds. The rigid formula is declared. The rôle of the Communist party is stated. There is the usual appeal to righteousness, and the usual misstatements of fact. It was not true, for example, that 90 per cent of Viet-Nam had been liberated, and it was strangely ironical that Liu Shao-chi should speak of a "war of national liberation" developing in Indonesia at almost the same moment when the Indonesian revolutionaries were signing at The Hague a treaty which would inevitably give them full power over the islands. Why the appeal to naked force? Moeso had employed naked force during the uprising at Madioen during the previous year, and the appeal to violence had so exasperated his countrymen that the uprising was crushed with ease. What had happened was clear. A pattern had been set, and this pattern was dangerously approaching toward dogma; it was a dogma to be followed to the letter six months later in North Korea. With the statement of a dangerous dogma, which may well have the effect of defeating Asiatic Communism, the third phase of the struggle had begun, and it is clear that the impetus came from Peking rather than Moscow. "We bear," said Liu Shao-chi, "a special responsibility towards the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia and Australasia." And the special responsibility consisted of the leadership of Asiatic Communism.

<sup>10</sup> *Pacific Affairs*, September, 1950, where the document is quoted from a Morse transcript.

But what precisely is Asiatic Communism? What is its doctrine? How is it related to the doctrines of Stalinism? Whose end does it serve? Fortunately we know the answers to many of these questions. As we might expect, the answers are exceedingly simple, though their implications are profoundly complex.

There exists a profound divergence between Marxist theory and Asiatic Communism. The Asiatic Communists themselves insist that they are following Marxist doctrine, but they can only do this by giving new and Asiatic interpretations to the Marxist dialectic, for while Marxist theory is rigid, Asiatic Communism is often variable. Marxist theory places a blind reliance on the industrial proletariat; Asiatic Communism must, if it is to survive, place reliance on the peasantry, at least until a powerful proletariat has emerged. Marxist theory and Russian Soviet practice demand the destruction of the bourgeoisie and the kulak, the rich peasant. Asiatic Communism, with its insistence upon capital, retains the bourgeoisie and makes a distinction between the rich peasant and the landlord, and the landlords themselves are not penalized if they have behaved well toward the peasants, though they are compelled to surrender their excess land. One of the most remarkable facts about Asiatic Communism is that rents, usually limited by law to a third of the crop, are still being paid by tenants in the Communist-dominated areas of India, Indochina, and China. Russian Soviet dogmatism has led to the creation of two vast classes hardly distinguishable from those in capitalist countries: the rulers and the ruled. Asiatic Communism is far more egalitarian, and is conscious of the dangers of simple stratifications. Society is seen as a huge complex of interests, with a vast multiplicity of overlapping classes, and in this complex even the private capitalist is seen to have his place. In effect, Asiatic Communism approaches closely to the British form of socialism, with one cardinal difference: it is infinitely more capricious and authoritarian, and therefore it makes more mistakes.

The mistakes committed by the Communists in Asia have led inevitably to splits within the party. For the most part they are not based on doctrinal differences so much as on rivaling personalities. There have been two violent splits in the Chinese Communist party, the first occurring when Li Li-san demanded proletarian uprisings against Mao Tse-tung's demand for peasant uprisings; this led to

Li Li-san's expulsion by Pavel Miff, the Comintern delegate, in 1931. The second occurred when Chang Kuo-tao attempted to assume the position occupied by Mao Tse-tung after they had both arrived in Yen-an. He was sent at the head of an army to occupy parts of Kansu province and failed so miserably that he was compelled to flee to the Kuomintang. But the second quarrel had its seeds in the personal rivalry between the two leaders and could hardly be dignified as a doctrinal quarrel. Today there are two rival Communist parties in India, five (or six) in Burma, two in Ceylon, and two in Indochina. Recently, too, Luis Taruc has announced that he has not divorced himself from the program of the Stalinist Mariano Balgos, the very vehemence of his disclaimer of friction suggesting that he is at variance on matters concerning policy. That there should be splits and divergencies of opinion within Asiatic Communist parties is only to be expected. Ambitions rule, the authoritarian temper remains, the play of individual ambitions is a factor to be reckoned with. It is here that danger arises: there is always the possibility that the Communist leader will become irresponsible; if there is a nihilist violence lurking beneath the surface throughout Asia, the same violence lurks in the minds of Communist rulers. The virulence of much Communist propaganda suggests how close the violence is to the surface.

Asiatic Communism accepts Marxist doctrine as Christians accept the Sermon on the Mount, allowing themselves the privilege of considerable variation of interpretation. The continual explorations by the Chinese Communists within the works of Stalin in an effort to discover how accurately Stalin had prophesied the evolution of the revolution only demonstrate how deadly wrong Stalin has always been, for the Asiatic Communist revolution follows in its main essentials the "reasonable revolution" which Sjahrir once outlined, but less methodically, at greater expense of blood, with a furious impatience, and with a perfect distaste for arriving at diplomatic solutions. The Indonesian revolution remains the touchstone. Against this it is possible to measure the rest with something like mathematical accuracy, for we know roughly how many people were killed in order that the Indonesian revolution should be brought about: the number has been estimated at 30,000. The number of Chinese who died

because the Communists were impatient to solidify their gains and the Kuomintang was impatient to hold on to its fast disappearing power was in the region of 14,000,000. A conservative estimate of the losses in Viet-Minh areas places them at 120,000. The deaths brought about by the Hukbalahap uprising are probably less than 6,000, but they are quickly mounting. Sjahrir's "reasonable revolution" and the violence of the Communist rebellions must always be at war with one another; there seems to be no way, either in Asia or in European Russia, to teach the Communists the value of human lives.

But if the Asiatic Communist rise to power has followed an inevitable pattern in its main essentials, there was one respect where the development was not inevitable. It would have been perfectly possible for America and Great Britain to have led the Asiatic revolt. They failed. The orientation toward the Soviet Union by Asiatic Communist countries is largely a result of their failure, for there were no doctrinal reasons why Asiatic Communism should "lean to one side." It would have been perfectly possible to imagine an Asiatic Communist revolt which "leaned to all sides," for the Asiatic countries, unlike the countries behind the iron curtain, are not under the compelling necessity to obey any masters but themselves. When the decision was made in Washington to arm the Kuomintang against the Chinese Communists, the American Government placed itself on the side which opposed the inevitable social revolution in China and forfeited the hope of any alliance with the new revolutionary party. The vast sums of money, as distinct from the expenditure on armaments, poured into the hands of the unregenerated reactionaries of Asia were also contributing factors in the American defeat: the pride of the Asiatic nations rebelled against the loaded gifts, just as previously they had rebelled before the gratuitous advice of the members of the Comintern. American unwillingness to assume social responsibilities in Asia in 1945 and 1946 was catastrophic, for to decline the burden of social responsibility was also to decline the burden of leadership. Today America is deprived of real control over the destinies of Asia and can no more "contain" Communism there than it can "contain" Communism in the Soviet Union. All it can do at this late date is to align itself with the social revolution in Asia.

To do this it will have to confess its errors in the past and invent new techniques which will demonstrate its abiding good will to the peasants of Asia.

The Comintern failed to bring about the Communist revolution in Asia; instead, the revolution was brought to success by men who saw Communism in the light of their own practical experience. But beyond all Stalin's fumbling and all the complex directives of the Comintern, there were all the implications of the Congress of Eastern Peoples at Baku, where Zinoviev, Radek, Ostrovsky, and John Reed addressed a motley assemblage of Turks and Persians who flashed their swords and shouted hurrahs and, when urged to declare a holy war, did nothing so impracticable but returned quietly to their tents. The rise of Asiatic Communism owes nothing to Zinoviev's fiery speeches at the time, but it owes a great deal to the mythology which inspired Zinoviev and Bukharin, who proclaimed: "We are the triumphant driving force of world history. On the topmost ranges of human will and action we build and struggle, suffer and triumph." The statement was demonstrably untrue as fact, but it was demonstrably true as myth; and with this myth to support them the Communists conquered in China, sustained by the sense of the inevitability of their victory and by the knowledge that the Soviet Union would always support them, though in fact, until they were already a power, it never did.

Far more than Lenin and Stalin, Zinoviev and Bukharin are the fathers of the Asiatic Communist revolution. They were the men who saw in apocalyptic colors the huge rôle to be played later by the Asiatic peasants at a time when the colonial powers believed that Asiatic manpower would serve them indefinitely. When Zinoviev spoke at Baku, he was addressing himself to those who were least likely to hear his special pleadings, for they possessed a mythology of their own; beyond them, separated from Baku by deserts and mountains of ice, lay "the toiling masses who will one day arise," thirsting for the mythology he offered them with such singular precision and foresight.

The bonfire has been lit, but it is essential to observe that it is a bonfire with mythological origins and that it must, for a while at least, "warm itself in myth." Years before the Chinese Communists established themselves in the Kiangsi mountain strongholds, a young



Yunnanese poet wrote of the "Wind Fire Mountains" where the exploited masses of China would find refuge. It is in such terms that revolutionary mythologies are created. For the Chinese peasant Moscow belongs to the language of mythology, just as Hy Brazil belonged to the language of mythology of the Elizabethan seaman. He sees himself as someone about to embark on a journey at least as exciting and as perilous as the adventures of the first colonizers. Stalin wears the features of the Grand Cham. Remote, inaccessible, the greatest of conquerors, the inheritor of the sacred tradition, *triumphator* and *pontifex maximus*, Stalin alone possesses the keys to the kingdom. So the converted peasant of Asia has often been taught and so he often believes, and there is no reason to doubt his faith in this belief, for all other faiths have been removed from him. "The Great Leader, the Divine Stalin," to whom so many enraptured scrolls have been presented, represents even to the Chinese peasants the man who was most responsible for their victory. The tragedy lies here: for it was the peasants themselves who hurled the Kuomintang into the sea, and one day they may realize that life can be lived without an authoritarian mythology.

Meanwhile, over large areas of Asia, the peasant may still choose between the "mythological revolution" of the Communists and the "reasonable revolution" of Sjahrir. These are the only choices. He will not, because he cannot, choose the "revolution to go backward," which the French in Indochina have offered him, nor will he assent to corrupt governments backed by foreign arms. The dark shapes of Bao Dai, Syngman Rhee, Elpidio Quirino, and Chiang Kai-shek have nothing to offer him: they belong to no traditions, possess no mythological power or have had their power stripped from them, nor can the quality of reasonableness, with all the attendant hopes of a "reasonable revolution," be found in them. He looks for young leaders who have lived dangerously, and with surprising frequency he has found them.

No one can foretell the course of the Asiatic Communist revolution. Today the red star blazes over Asia, but there is no reason to believe that it will blaze there permanently. Asiatic Communism obeys its own laws, which are not the laws of the imperialists who decide the policies of the Soviet Union. It cannot maintain itself unless it obeys its own dynamic; and for many years it will have its

roots among the peasants, who will not be swayed by doctrines and who possess a particular distaste for mythologies which fail to offer concrete rewards. Where Asiatic Communism allies itself most completely with the agrarian revolution, thus offering tangible rewards to the peasants, it will be most successful; and where it interferes with the normal logic of the peasants, it will be least successful. Like Antaeus, once it leaves the earth, it will lose its strength.

In Asia "international Communism" has largely failed. Today we are witnessing the birth of a new social order applicable only to Asia, its workings understood only by Asiatic minds, and the wisest of them can only guess at the course it will pursue. But it is at least conceivable that there will be eventually some kind of marriage between the "mythological revolution," with all its hardships, and the "reasonable revolution" which can be attained by a careful study of social forces and by employing some form of socialism which leaves men masters of themselves.

## II

# CHINA: The Long Wooden Ladders

We arrived in the morning in a landscape where everything was new, and we knew that nothing would ever be recognizable again. —SHEN TSENG-WEN

WHEN the time comes for the historian to write the history of the Chinese Communist conquest of China, with all the documents before him, so that the historian will be able to thread his way between the claims and counterclaims of both sides, it is possible that he will find one word which will explain the whole—"improvisation." It was a war entirely unlike any war which has been fought in recent times. An atomic bomb had fallen in Hiroshima. Historians and political prophets might be excused if they foresaw that all large wars of the future would make use of the huge instruments of destruction invented by modern scientists. In China nothing of this kind happened. Endless streams of armament and equipment were being sent through Kuomintang ports and placed in the hands of the Kuomintang High Command, but the war as it was fought and as it raged over the whole length of China, took place as though these instruments of destruction had never existed. The Kuomintang troops received airplanes, tanks, and heavy guns, but they rarely knew how to use them and surrendered them to the enemy at the first opportunity, and the Chinese Communists either did not know how to use them or regarded them as obstructions to the course of the war. The army that conquered China did not notably differ,

except in its numbers, from the barefoot rabble of peasant boys, armed with a handful of machine guns and some homemade rifles, that set out on the Long March in 1934.

The conquest of China, which began with the little known battle of Huaihai, was accomplished in less than a year. Why did it happen?

There were many reasons. Not the least of them was the long series of surrenders by Kuomintang commanders, the lack of any intelligent strategy of defense by the Kuomintang High Command, and the continued incapacity of Chiang Kai-shek to understand that the war had to be fought on moral and psychological planes as well as on the field of battle. The last victory of a Kuomintang army had occurred in January, 1942, with the successful defense of Changsha against the Japanese. Since then there had been sporadic efforts to give purpose and meaning to the Kuomintang party, but all had failed. Selfishness, corruption in high places, the lack of any political philosophy appropriate to the times, the complete *unmaneuverability* of the Kuomintang, all these contributed to its decline. There was no inherent reason why it should have declined so dramatically. Under Sun Yat-sen the party had possessed a revolutionary program, thousands upon thousands of young men had flocked to its banners with the most consummate idealism, and up to the beginning of the Northern March in 1927, two years after the death of Sun Yat-sen, the original revolutionary impetus had successfully carried it forward. By 1942, when Chiang Kai-shek was already giving orders to phantom armies and was deeply ensconced behind the Ichang Gorges, he set about writing a book which he called *China's Destiny*, but which was in a very real sense an attempt toward an autobiography, seeing himself as the destined ruler of China. In this book, in a passage which should have chilled Western statesmen, he described the peculiar rôle now to be played by the party he led. He wrote:

The Kuomintang Party, in the fifty-eight years since it was founded by the Father of our country, has become like T'ai Shan and the North Pole, majestic and unchanging. Its strength is ever increasing, and it has become the permanent and unique revolutionary political party of China, differing completely from the numerous other parties that perished as times passed.

This status has not been attained by chance, but by the impersonal, unselfish, generous and tolerant spirit of the Kuomintang.<sup>1</sup>

It was clear from passages like these that the Kuomintang no longer fulfilled a revolutionary rôle: it had become in his own words "unchanging," and the virtues Chiang Kai-shek ascribed to the party were simply the virtues he ascribed to himself. It was not true that the Kuomintang was "unselfish, generous and tolerant," though it was extraordinarily true that the party had become over a long series of years impersonal. In effect, the party had become crystallized and solidified. It no longer bowed to external forces, no longer shaped them. When Chiang Kai-shek wrote that he desired that "China should become crystallised in a solid rock-like body," he was defining his own limitations, and the real China, of constant flux and perpetual motion, of continual striving toward new frontiers and new methods, was conveniently forgotten. Having established that the function of the party was to act as an unchanging core as majestic as the North Pole, which never moves from its place in the heavens, he was consciously or unconsciously affirming that the party occupied the privileged position of the Sage, who also was described in Mencius and Confucius as "majestic as Tai Shan." Obscure forces of Chinese mythology, which he never understood, made him attempt to revive a paternalistic and feudal system of government; and where, in the past, the emperor ruled by virtue of his mandate from heaven, Chiang Kai-shek ruled by virtue of his secret police.

The astonishing degradation of the Kuomintang during the closing years of the war, its vicious intolerance, and its gradual separation from all popular movements arose very largely as the result of Chiang Kai-shek's obstinacy. He had read deeply in the histories of the Chou Dynasty. He believed that he was himself descended from Duke Wen, who had founded the dynasty in the remote past. He was accustomed to obedience, but he had little taste for inquiry. In a strictly Confucian sense he was a man of many virtues, and it was characteristic of him that he pardoned and gave high position to

<sup>1</sup> *China's Destiny*, ed. Philip A. Jaffe (New York, Roy Publishers), p. 115. Copyright, 1947, by Roy Publishers.

many of his enemies. Against the Chinese Communists, however, he was as merciless as it is possible for any man to be; and he was merciless because he did not understand them.

Long before the Chinese Communists left Yen-an, the civil war had resolved itself into a duel to the death fought between two men. To a quite extraordinary degree they represented the opposing forces. Chiang Kai-shek, born in a family of moneylenders and salt merchants, with some Malay blood flowing in his veins, trained in Japan and possessing the attitude of mind of a Japanese drill sergeant, unscholarly and painstaking, was confronted by a tall Hunanese peasant, born in a family of farmers, with some tribal blood flowing in his veins, a scholar who delighted in carelessness and improvisation, and who was perfectly content until the age of twenty-seven to remain a student at various colleges and universities. Chiang Kai-shek took up soldiering to repair his family fortunes. Mao Tse-tung took up soldiering for a brief period when he was sixteen, and hated it so much that he swore never to allow himself to come under the authority of the military. There is no evidence of any military tradition in Chiang Kai-shek's family. There is, however, some evidence that a military tradition existed in Mao Tse-tung's family for many generations: his father had been a minor officer in a Manchu garrison, and so had his grandfather before him. These two people, possessing entirely different characteristics, one rooted in the past, the other in the present, both submitted to intense strains; and in the end there was nothing particularly astonishing in the fact that the peasant and the improviser accomplished his aim, and the official, the stickler for regulations, cracked. But it is far more to the point to recognize that they represented two opposed attitudes of mind which have persisted on the Chinese scene since time immemorial.

Roughly, those opposed attitudes can be described as Taoist and Confucian. The Chinese have never suffered from the traditional Western distrust of the lonely places of the earth's surface. They liked to wander over their beautiful land, taking comfort in the remote crags and the hidden valleys, journeying across the whole length and breadth of their country whenever they felt disposed. In his youth Mao Tse-tung wandered through most of the historic cities of east China on walking tours, and came to know them inti-

mately, and when he was a boy he wandered barechested over Hunan. He had no liking for Taoist ceremonial—original Taoism had long ago become a decadent animistic religion, with its own pope and tribes of black-gowned priests—but the temper of his mind, his wanderings, his habit of writing poems continually and then throwing the poems away, his furious belief in the mind's own energy, and his early addiction to philosophical anarchism, all these point to a Taoist temper. In his childhood he rebelled from his Confucian father. Chiang Kai-shek worshiped his father, and demanded that the Chinese people should regard himself as the father of the country. His hatred of the Chinese Communists was the unforgiving hatred of a father toward an ill behaved child. When, in October, 1946, a meeting was arranged between the two men, Chiang Kai-shek treated his adversary with icy disdain, and Mao Tse-tung said afterward: "He treated me like a peasant. He was like a wealthy landlord speaking to a small laborer on his farm." The habits of a lifetime had not changed, and to the end of his days Chiang Kai-shek will probably continue to give orders, believing in himself as the great Sage, even when he has no armies and no people to command.

It is important that we should know from Chiang Kai-shek's lips his attitude to Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communists. He has never, of course, written newspaper articles entitled "What I Think of the Chinese Communists," but in a hundred ways he has confirmed the suspicion that he hates them with so blind a hatred that when he is confronted with them all judgment, even military judgment, is suspended. Shortly after he was arrested by Chang Hsueh-liang in December, 1936, he composed a brief account of the Sian Incident. Though in the course of ten days he had almost daily interviews with an emissary of Mao Tse-tung, no mention of this was allowed in his diary, and anyone reading his account could surmise that the Chinese Communists had played no part in the incident. The omission was revealing, for it suggests that he regarded them as nonexistent. It was Chiang Kai-shek who invented the term "annihilation campaigns"—campaigns which were designed to obliterate the Chinese Communists in months, or weeks, or hours. Once he even declared that "the last five minutes have come." In all this he was strangely comparable with Hitler, who spoke so often of

annihilating the Russians that in his own mind they had long since been annihilated. When it became clear to him that they survived, he kept saying, "They must be annihilated again and again." Chiang Kai-shek fought seven separate campaigns against Mao Tse-tung, lost them all, sacrificed innumerable lives in the contest, and even when he was flung out of China, buoyed himself up with the thought that an eighth campaign, more violent than any of the others, would lead him to victory.

In *China's Destiny* Chiang Kai-shek drew a quite extraordinary self-portrait. He also drew, perhaps unconsciously, a portrait of Mao Tse-tung, not in the form of a deliberate outline, but in one of those gratuitous quotations from the *Analects* of Confucius which, to the psychologist and the historian, are more revealing than direct statements. Chiang Kai-shek had been discussing the necessity of doing away with harmful theories, and then quite suddenly he devotes a whole paragraph to Confucius's views on a certain Mu Shao-cheng, who fell into the hands of Confucius and was executed:

Seven days after becoming chief justice of Lu, Confucius put Mu Shao-cheng to death, and explained: "There are five kinds of evil people in the world, and thieves and robbers are not among them. The first are those whose hearts are rebellious and dangerous. The second are those whose conduct is persistently depraved. The third are those whose words are false and unconvincing. The fourth are those whose learning is extensive in undesirable fields. And the fifth are those who are acquiescent and helpful towards misbehavior. A person with any of these five faults should not escape execution by the superior man, and Mu Shao-cheng possesses them all: his dwelling serves as a gathering place for his disciples, forming a party; his theories serve to beautify unorthodoxy and please the multitude; his stubborn arguments are sufficient to upset the right and constitute a new and independent theory—he is thus a villain among men and must be eliminated."<sup>2</sup>

The long quotation, which appears significantly enough in the chapter entitled "Problems in National Reconstruction," is as direct a portrait of Mao Tse-tung seen by Chiang Kai-shek as we shall ever possess. Here are the "five faults" to be set up against the four classic Confucian virtues, and it is perfectly clear that to Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Tse-tung suffered grotesquely from all of them. There could be

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.



no mercy for men whose "learning was extensive in undesirable fields," even though the "undesirable fields" were never defined. As for the rebellious, they must be stamped out ruthlessly, and there is no suggestion that the causes of their rebellion should be examined. Elsewhere, Chiang Kai-shek quotes again from Confucius: "One should sacrifice one's own life for benevolence, but not covet life to injure benevolence." "Benevolence" had become more important than men.

These matters are not unimportant toward an understanding of present-day China. Wars are fought in the minds of people before they are fought on battlefields. The defects of Chiang Kai-shek's character were precisely those which led to the decay of the Kuomintang party, which, until the very end, obeyed his whip.

Chiang Kai-shek had no genius for improvisation: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese peasants had genius for almost nothing else. They refused to obey the rules. They fought according to rules invented on the spur of the moment, and since no one else knew the rules they were in a position to dominate the moral and intellectual atmosphere of the time. Having jettisoned traditional methods of warfare, as they had jettisoned traditional ideas, they were able to look at each new development as it occurred with a freshness their enemies could never possess. "The city must be held at all costs," Chiang Kai-shek declared repeatedly through 1948. In his book *Strategical Problems of China's Revolutionary Wars*, Mao Tse-tung showed how over a long period he had fought against the concept of holding onto acquired positions against a superior enemy. "Such an attitude," he wrote, "is common in many Chinese Communist circles, but it is not correct. What the revolutionary army must have is the utmost maneuverability. There are times when it is advisable to retreat and to lose a whole province, if we so can so arrange ourselves that a few weeks later two provinces fall into our hands."

The strategy at the battle of Huaihai, the first of the two decisive encounters which brought about the defeat of the Kuomintang armies, was an object lesson in the methods of the Communist commanders. Chinese Communist commentators have divided the battle into three phases, and they tend to regard it as an example of a positional war waged over a large area embracing hundreds of square miles north of Suchow and south of Pengpu. The Kuomintang em-

ployed tanks and airplanes; the Chinese Communists had none. The Kuomintang troops were strongly entrenched within the fortified city of Suchow, and fortifications had been thrown up in depth around the city. They had, according to Communist estimates, about 3,000,000 troops in an area bounded by the Grand Canal and the Lunghai and Tientsin-Pukow railways. Though these figures seem astonishing enough to Western readers they are not necessarily inaccurate, for the three million represented the main Kuomintang defensive forces in Central China and they were supplemented by the survivors from the Manchurian campaigns. The Communists claimed that they had roughly the same number of troops.

The battle, which began on November 7, 1948, lasted for two months. It was not in any real sense a positional war. What happened was that the huge concentration of Kuomintang troops, ordered to defend the railway which guarded the approaches to Nanking and the Yangtze River, was slowly broken into pieces by an enemy which thought wholly in terms of maneuverability. As the battle progressed, it became evident that the Kuomintang forces resembled an enormous plodding water buffalo, protected by a thick hide and by nothing else, bled to death by a pack of ravening dogs. In the end, blinded, dazed, bleeding in a hundred places, it simply sank to its knees and died.

The first phase of the campaign revolved around the heavily armored right wing of the Kuomintang General Huang Po-tao. Suchow was protected on its left wing by General Chiu Ching-chuan's Second Army Group, also heavily armored. South of the city stood the Twelfth Army Group under General Li Mi. The city itself was occupied by the Thirteenth Army Group. The defense of the city therefore assumed the shape of a vast triangle. At the apex of the triangle, however, there lay a flaw, for at that point had been placed some 20,000 Manchurian troops belonging to the old Northwestern Army which had once owned allegiance to the "Christian General" Feng Yu-hsiang. Because they were Manchurians, they tended to despise the Kuomintang officers who were put over them. The army of Communist General Chen Yi lay in the neighborhood of a lake to the northwest, directly facing General Chiu Ching-chuan's Second Army Group, composed of veterans from

the Burma campaign. These were by far the best troops under Chiang Kai-shek's command, and they were expected to bear the brunt of the struggle.

The Communists had no intention of fighting a positional war against the Burma veterans. They had learned of the presence of the Manchurians, and they had sufficient information to know that General Huang Po-tao would be unable to maneuver his forces under a surprise attack. The Communist armies were trained for long night marches. Leaving the lakes, General Chen Yi led his forces eastward, crushed the Manchurians, drove a wedge into the Seventh Army Group, broke the group into two separate pieces, interposed one column to prevent them from falling back on Suchow, and sent another 100 miles to the east to encircle them, and then, using his two columns like a nutcracker, broke the army group at Nienchuang, using captured tanks to divide the army into small segments which could be crushed at leisure. In the confusion Kuomintang bombers bombed Kuomintang troops. Though parts of the Second and Thirteenth Army groups were ordered to relieve General Huang Po-tao, they made no effort to arrive in time, fearful of the consequences of abandoning the immediate vicinity of Suchow; and half the tanks, with which they hoped to spearhead their attack, were destroyed by hastily dug tank traps or they were brought to a standstill by peasants who threw bottles of lighted rapeseed oil under the treads.

Massive armies were in movement, but essentially this was still a war of peasant guerrillas, and so it was to remain to the end. Most of the information received by the Kuomintang from the peasants was wrong. Guerrilla forces were continually hampering the enemy. Peasant militia combed the roads and fields for enemy deserters and stragglers. They hampered bombers by lighting fires at night near places they wanted to protect. They rescued the wounded, hid their stores of grain from the Kuomintang, and added to existing confusions by walking up and down their fields with lanterns, and then suddenly vanishing into tunnels, or streaming down the roads against the current of the Kuomintang, declaring that they were refugees—two guerrilla tricks which were to be employed with considerable success during the early stages of the war in Korea. Three

weeks later, Chiang Kai-shek had lost by death, desertion, or wounds 200,000 of his troops, and most of the right wing had been destroyed.

To anyone familiar with the "annihilation campaigns" fought against the Chinese Communists before the Long March, the strategy of the Kuomintang remains inexplicable, for in the battle for Suchow the Communists employed exactly the same strategy. They would deliberately place themselves close to the heaviest armored and best equipped divisions of the enemy, then, by forced marches at night, they would suddenly cut across the country and attack the weakest link in the chain, drive through it, and use the impetus gained in the first break-through to enable them to fight an encirclement campaign against any division in sight; afterward there would be a quick return to a "point of withdrawal."<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this preliminary engagement was to cut the railway lines north and south of Suchow, thereby depriving the Kuomintang forces of their maneuverability. Henceforward they were at the mercy of the Communists.

Chiang Kai-shek was determined to save Suchow "to the last man, and to the last breath of the last man." Suchow lies at the southern extremity of the Great Northern Plain and dominates the approaches to the Yangtze River. An army descending from the north can fan out and advance toward the Yangtze River in whatever direction it pleases, but an army intent upon driving toward Peking from the south must pass through the bottleneck in the neighborhood of Suchow, to the east of the lakes. The army of General Chen Yi was not the only Communist army which had come down from Manchuria. Another army, under the command of one-eyed General Liu Po-cheng, had skirted Suchow, attacked Suhsien, which lies fifty miles to the south on the railway, and established contact with General Chen Yi's forces. The Communist forces now held a line fifty miles south of Suchow, parallel to the Yangtze. Any reinforcements from the south would have to break through the line.

As the Communists had suspected, reinforcements were sent up at once. They comprised an army of eleven divisions, numbering

<sup>3</sup> An account of the strategies employed in the "annihilation campaigns" is given in my *Mao Tse-tung* (New York, Henry Schuman, 1950).

125,000 men with one mechanized column under the command of General Huang Wei. This army, swinging up from Hunan and then following the railway, crashed into the unsuspectedly large Communist cordon at Suhsien and was surrounded. For a few weeks it existed only by virtue of an airlift which dropped supplies. Large quantities of these supplies fell into Communist hands. The confusion in the Kuomintang ranks was made greater by conflicting commands received over the radio from Chiang Kai-shek, who could not understand why the encirclement was not broken and attributed it to the defection of the commander and the insubordination of the Hunanese troops. There were food riots. The 110th Division, once described as Chiang Kai-shek's élite guard, went over to the Communists. Shortly afterward the Communists, who had been waiting patiently, after a brief bombardment, moved in for the kill. In Suchow, General Tu Yu-ming, the former commander-in-chief in Manchuria, now the Generalissimo's deputy commander in East China, found himself with 22 divisions in the city and another 26 divisions concentrated at Pengpu, some hundred miles south of Suhsien, under General Li Yen-nien. From Nanking came orders that he should drive north to the relief of Suchow. He failed, and since there seemed no hope of defending Suchow, and more and more Communist forces were preparing to take the city by storm, the new order went out that all Kuomintang armies within the Suchow area should fall back on Nanking. It was already too late. General Tu Yu-ming, who suffered from the same kind of obstinacy as Chiang Kai-shek, seeing himself surrounded, proposed to remain where he was; and he would have stayed there until the Communists forced their way into the streets if the Generalissimo had not threatened to deprive him of his air support, which included bags of rice sent down by parachute. On the night of December 1, leaving a small column behind to act as a decoy, and throwing out three or four diversionary columns in different directions, his 22 divisions left Suchow by the southwest gate, the only one not directly covered by Communist forces. At dawn the long column of tanks and artillery, and nearly a quarter of a million foot soldiers, found themselves opposed by Liu Po-cheng's soldiers and guerrillas deployed over a sixty-mile front. There followed a campaign lasting forty days in which General Tu Yu-ming attempted to break

through repeated encirclements, harassed by guerrillas on his flanks, his tanks impeding his own progress, unable to set up his heavy artillery because the guerrillas were all round him and there was no adequate means of determining in which directions the guns should be fired, continually giving orders which were never obeyed, while his army split up into its component parts, each trying to force a separate passage to the south. Gradually the noose was tied tighter. Toward the end of December Communist reserves came flocking in from Shantung. At this point Tu Yu-ming gave orders that his army should stay where it was and fight it out to the end. This was what the Communists had been hoping for. While Tu Yu-ming's own army obeyed his orders, the armies of Sun Yuan-liang disobeyed, and were fired on by Kuomintang troops. Confusion increased. Sun Yuan-liang led his armies over to the Communists and immediately turned his guns and tanks against the deputy commander, who had lost, between December 1 and December 17, half of his effective forces. Ten days before Huang Hwei's troops at Suhsien had finally surrendered. Now surrenders came thick and fast. The ice-cold plain, so flat that it is possible to see every movement of the enemy twenty miles away, gave them no natural defenses. By January 10, when the last remnants of the huge army were rounded up, the Communists could assert that the Kuomintang had lost 600,000 in killed and wounded, and that 327,070 prisoners had been taken. In South China the only effective troops were those under the Kwangsi generals, and there could be no doubt that they would prove more loyal to their generals than to the Generalissimo. The great armies which were needed to defend Nanking had vanished on the plain which lies between the Huai River and the sea. The commander of these armies had taken to flight in the disguise of a Kuomintang prisoner of war escorted by his own bodyguard disguised as Communist troops. So terrible was this long battle that they said afterward that "the ice glowed red at night."<sup>4</sup>

The battle of Huaihai, though it involved millions of men and shaped the destiny of China, received hardly any attention in the

<sup>4</sup> There is a brief account of the Huaihai campaign in Jack Belden's *China Shakes the World* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1949), pp. 421-422. A fuller account is given in *People's China*, Aug. 1, 1950. The present account is based on these sources and bulletins issued by the Communists and the Kuomintang.

foreign press. The American *White Paper* mentions it only once, but then with ominous overtones. "It remains to be seen," wrote Ambassador Leighton Stuart to Secretary Marshall on November 8, 1948, "how many of Chiang Kai-shek's followers will remain after the news of [the defeat at] Mukden becomes generally known. Their members will be appreciably less when the assault on Suchow begins."<sup>5</sup> By April the massed Communists were pouring over the Yangtze, three million strong, and Chiang Kai-shek was beginning the long wanderings which led him to Chungking, then to the Tibetan foothills, and then to Formosa.

Why did Chiang Kai-shek fail so lamentably at Huaihai? Partly, of course, it was due to his strategy, his refusal to fight a guerrilla war, his stubborn desire to hold the towns. He saw defense in terms of strong points: he could not see it in terms of guerrilla war along discontinuous fronts. From the beginning Mao Tse-tung had seen that China provided an almost perfect terrain for guerrilla warfare. In May, 1938, writing in *Strategic Problems of Guerrilla Warfare Against Japan*, Mao Tse-tung said:

The major requirement for fighting guerrilla wars is vastness of area. That the guerrillas should have space to turn about in is the most important consideration of all. It follows, for example, that in small countries like Belgium, guerrilla warfare remains a practical impossibility. But in China this is a condition provided by nature. It is not a condition that needs to be attained or a problem that needs to be solved. It is a thing provided by nature that man needs only to make use of.

The argument that the guerrillas will always have the advantage in a country as large as China is probably irresistible; and it is almost certain that in time the Chinese Communists will in turn be destroyed in the same way.

It is possible that the Chinese Communist conquest of China is the last of the large-scale guerrilla wars. It is possible, but not probable. The North Korean army employed a form of guerrilla war in the initial stages of its campaign, often with disastrous effect upon the South Korean troops and on the Americans, who had not fought guerrilla campaigns for more than a century. By his own profession Mao Tse-tung learned more from Sun Wu's *Articles of War* than

<sup>5</sup> *United States Relations with China*, Annex 166, p. 919.

from any other book, and those ancient aphorisms are worthy of being studied even in an age where the tank had taken the place of the chariot. Indeed, very much of what Sun Wu has to say about the chariot is applicable to modern tank warfare.

In its present form the book is divided into thirteen arbitrary sections. There is very little attempt toward outlining a complete syllabus of war. There is no argument, no progression. Sun Wu contents himself with a series of disjointed aphorisms, but each one of those aphorisms, first hammered out in a remote battlefield in the ancient state of Ch'i, was applicable to the Chinese Communist armies. He wrote:

There is no necessary advantage in numbers.

Be as swift as the wind, as calm as the forest, as consuming as fire.

Where discipline exists, disorder may be simulated; where there is courage, timidity may be simulated; where there is strength, weakness may be simulated.

In throwing in troops, drop them like a millstone on an egg, the solid on the void.

The best plan in military operations is to have no plan, so that the cleverest spies cannot find it out and the wisest people cannot fathom it.

Take the country and divide it among the people, allot the territory and distribute it advantageously.

The best plan is to strike at his war-plan, the next is to strike at his communications, the next is to strike at his armies, and the worst of all is to strike at his strongholds.

War is nothing but lies.

To lift the down of autumn shows no great strength, to see the sun and moon needs no clear sight, to hear the thunder no acute hearing. Therefore what was considered a victory by the good warriors of old was one obtained easily. The skilled warrior's victory brought him no great honor: he fought only when he was certain of victory.

If you plan the movements of your troops well, they will do what you did not even plan.

Very obscure and without form, very mysterious and without voice is this, but it is the arbiter of the enemy's destiny. We advance and he cannot resist, for we strike where there is only emptiness. We retire and he cannot pursue, for we are too quick for him to reach us. When we wish to fight, though the enemy may be ensconced behind high walls and deep moats, he will have to give battle because we attack a place that he must assist. So we locate him, but he does not locate us, and we keep together



while the enemy is defenceless. We are one united body while the enemy is divided into ten parts, so that with our ten parts we attack his one. Since we are many and the enemy few, and many can easily attack few, our victory will be easy: for the place where we give battle will be unknown, and being unknown the enemy will have to prepare in many places. So it is that victory is a thing we make ourselves.<sup>6</sup>

The extraordinary self-confidence which breathes through Sun Wu is visible throughout Mao Tse-tung's military writings. Essentially, there are no complications: everything is seen in purely human terms. Asked what he would do if the Communist armies were confronted with tanks, he answered, throwing out his arms and legs, "We have feet and arms." It was a sufficient answer, to be remembered by those who put their trust in mechanical weapons. Sun Wu wrote, "The general should keep in mind that all his information about the enemy comes from men." Mao Tse-tung, confronted with an enormous mechanized army, put his trust in the ability of ordinary peasants, and it was because he possessed this trust, and the Kuomintang High Command was lacking in it, that he won.

But to win under such conditions involved endless improvisation. At the battle of Huaihai the improvisations assumed an enormous scale. The army had to be fed, clothed, kept warm. The peasants smuggled charcoal burners hidden in their long sleeves to the guerrillas. Somehow forty million catties of grain had to be smuggled through the lines. The Communists claimed that the East Kiangsu peasants marched thirty-five miles a day through battle lines to bring rice to the soldiers. It is not impossible. The Communists had organized the peasantry. They even organized the old women, who sewed shoes for the Communist armies: they were ordered to make the soles especially strong and to embroider "For Victory" on the toes. How deeply the Chinese Communists were committed to improvisation on the traditional patterns can be seen from one little known aspect of the siege of Peking. While the siege

<sup>6</sup> No completely scholarly translation of Sun Wu's book has yet appeared in English. The translations given here are based on the admirable version by A. L. Sadler, *Three Military Classics of China* (Australasian Medical Publishing Company, 1944). Sun Wu's apothegms have little in common with statements in military treatises, but foot soldiers are likely to recognize their truth from experience. The classical injunction, "Hit them where they ain't," is exactly the kind of statement which Sun Wu was making.

was in progress, it was learned that in the village of Haitien, eight or nine miles away, the Chinese Communists had constructed thirty wooden scaling ladders which they proposed to bring up to the walls of Peking on wooden rollers. This incident occurred three and a half years after the dropping of the atomic bomb. The long wooden ladders were almost a symbol of their rise to power. It was by such simple means, in defiance of huge destructive engines, that they conquered China.<sup>7</sup>

If their methods of conquering a country were simple, so too were their slogans, their battle cries, and the pronunciamientos. All statements were reduced to intelligible terms, and this in itself was a surprising innovation, for Chiang Kai-shek had delighted in impossible contradictions and evasions. His San Min Chu I Youth Corps had been taught to regard Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles of the People* as a bible, but the book was full of shifting emphases, the statements of problems never resolved. The Chinese Communists took a simpler path. They merely stated, over and over again, that Mao Tse-tung was the destined savior of China and that the Kuomintang represented foreign interests. It was not true: the Kuomintang was purely nationalist, and even imperialist, as the invasion of Northern Indochina by General Lu Han revealed. But there was sufficient truth in the charge to enable people to believe in the Chinese Communist statements with a clear conscience. During World War II Western statesmen were accustomed to preface their remarks on policy in the Far East by saying they hoped to see a strong, united, and independent China. The phrase became an acceptable diplomatic cliché. But to the Chinese it was always more: it was what they wanted angrily and passionately, and they were prepared to fight for it without regard to the cost.

The Chinese Communists had other weapons, and most of them were weapons which the Kuomintang could have employed if it had not been blinded by authoritarian premises. The Kuomintang shot prisoners: the Chinese Communists accepted their surrender, sent them into training camps, and within two months usually found that the prisoners were prepared to fight the Kuomintang. Mercy paid. They taught their soldiers to be respectful to the peasants.

<sup>7</sup> The Americans failed to employ guerrilla tactics successfully in South Korea until the landing at Inchon; then, once again, the scaling ladders appeared.

Respect paid. They possessed a secret police, but they held it on leading strings; the arbitrary arrests and assassinations which characterized the Kuomintang had no place in Communist China. Moreover, the people as a whole detested the oppression of the Kuomintang and the corruption of its leading members, and could not understand why America should have regarded men like T. V. Soong, H. H. Kung, and Tai Li as representative of China. They were not. Corrupt beyond ordinary standards, these men did nothing to conceal their corruption; and in a very real sense their names, their wealth, their behavior, and their tarnished prestige were hostages offered to the Chinese Communists, who could say and did say, "We are fighting in order that corruption of any kind shall cease." It is for this reason that President Truman's declaration in support of the régime in Formosa is likely to be misunderstood throughout the Far East. There is no reason to believe that the discredited government of Chiang Kai-shek will be received kindly by the people of China if it should return to the mainland. A strong, united, and independent China has come into existence, and it owes nothing to Chiang Kai-shek's endeavors.

The Chinese Communists were compelled to improvise by the nature of their experiment, and because Mao Tse-tung constantly refused to dogmatize. The great dogmas which receive the assent of members of the Russian Communist party are notably absent in China; and considerable freedom has been given to other parties like the Democratic League, which cannot be expected to share fully in Communist theories. In 1927, at the age of thirty-three, Mao Tse-tung envisaged a revolution of the poor peasants against the rest, and actively took part in two revolts, one large and one small, with the purpose of creating village councils through which the poor peasants ruled. By 1935 he was appointing landowners in high positions, and since 1937 he has consistently denied that the purpose of the Communist revolution was to disinherit the rich peasants. They were to remain, though they were no longer allowed to exert a disproportionate political and economic influence.

The land reforms of the Chinese Communists answered a real need of the people. In North Korea, where Soviet influence was pronounced, the land was leased to the villagers, the land titles being kept in the possession of the village councils. In China the

ownership of the land was given to the peasants, not leased or loaned, with grain taxes levied at a progressive rate weighted against the wealthier peasants. The summer-harvest decree issued by Peking in August, 1950, announced for example a 10 per cent levy on "poor" peasants, 15 per cent for "middle" peasants, 25 per cent for "rich peasants," 50 per cent for "landlords," and 80 per cent for "special families," whose annual farm receipts exceeded certain stipulations.<sup>8</sup> Within very close limits the same taxes had been claimed since 1936, a time when Communist agricultural policy became crystalized. One of the more remarkable things about Chinese Communist policy toward the peasants was its consistency: it was so consistent that in 1948 the Central Committee of the party reissued unchanged two documents first published under the Kiangsi Soviets in 1933. They were: *How to Analyze Classes* and *Decisions on Some Questions Concerning the Agricultural Struggle*. The first was especially important, for it attempted to solve borderline cases and to decide such cases as whether landlords who joined the Red militia were to receive the same amount of land as militiamen. The long, unchanging tradition of agricultural reform worked in the Communists' favor. If they had changed with every change in dogma, the Chinese Communists could hardly have won the support of the peasants. That the Communists were not contemplating any change of the agrarian law in the immediate future was made clear by Liu Shao-chi in a speech delivered in Peking in June, 1950. He said: "Our policy of preserving a rich peasant economy is not to be regarded as temporary: it is a long term policy, that is, a rich peasant economy will be preserved throughout the whole stage of the New Democracy. Only when conditions mature for widespread mechanical farming, the organisation of collective farms and the socialist reform of the rural areas can the need for a rich peasant economy cease: and this will take a somewhat lengthy time."<sup>9</sup>

The agrarian reforms however were not always successful. In the south particularly serious excesses were committed in the wake of the conquest. The land taxes were not calculated according to simple percentages in every case. In Kwangsi and Kwangtung there were peasant revolts in the spring of 1950. The peasants attacked

<sup>8</sup> *New York Times*, Aug. 28, 1950.

<sup>9</sup> *People's China*, July 16, 1950.

government offices, looted public granaries, and assassinated Communist officials, complaining that they were being taxed more heavily than they were under the Kuomintang. The statement was partly true. Commissars had appeared, and with astonishing ease they had convinced the peasants that they possessed authority to commandeer grain. This was one reason for the protests. Another, and more singular one, arose as a result of the forced levy instituted partly in order to stabilize the yuan and partly to serve as a fund for bringing about reconstruction in a war-ravaged country. The levy, which could be paid off in grain, seriously diminished the standard of living throughout the country and did much to alienate the people from Communism. In Kwangtung and Kwangsi the movement of protest was fanned by the presence of Kuomintang guerrillas. The protest was legitimate, and shortly afterward the burden of the forced levy was considerably eased. Mao Tse-tung admitted that excesses had been committed—they were pardonable during the time of revolution, but they were unpardonable now—some farmers had been placed in the wrong tax categories, there was confusion in the minds of the villagers between rural exploitation (which was not permitted) and capitalist exploitation of industry (which was), and “commandism” in the shape of the self-elected commissars had arisen as a result of the emergencies of war. “Commandism” was henceforth forbidden. The allocation of peasant properties would take place according to the advice of peasant councils, and not as the result of the commands of army officers. On the whole, the agrarian law, as finally adopted in June, 1950, corresponded very closely to the original agrarian law of the Kiangsi Soviets, but in some respects it was considerably more moderate. Buddhist and Taoist monks and nuns were allowed their equal share of land, women’s agrarian interests were to be protected by the women’s agrarian councils, shrines were to be protected and safeguarded, an equal share of land in addition to their other shares was to be given to families which had suffered by the loss of a “martyr” in the revolutionary wars which followed the October Revolution in 1911, in the Anti-Japanese War, and in the war of liberation. Large forests, tea groves, tun-oil plantations, orchards, and reed lands could be distributed among the peasants, but only if they were not part of experimental farms where machinery and skilled tech-

niques were employed: these were to remain under their existing management. It was a sensible law accompanied by a sensible ritual, and the ritual itself assumed an almost sacramental quality. The ritual consisted of the solemn council of the villagers, the division of land with marking rods, the distribution of farm tools and the burning of title deeds. Whatever else the agrarian laws did, they succeeded in altering the atmosphere of the time. Now, for the first time, the peasants possessed a stake in the land. The phrase *fan chen*, which can be translated as "turning one's body over" or even "lifting one's feet," but which meant nothing less than a completely new orientation, a phrase constantly on the lips of the Communists, received its chief application in the agrarian laws. They were not "fair" to the great landowners, who had owned territories as large as American counties, but they were "fair" to the multitudes of dispossessed peasants.

But neither their achievements in the art of guerrilla war nor their reliance on the peasantry would have brought the Chinese Communists to power if there had not been, long before its final abdication, an intellectual and moral abdication on the part of the Kuomintang. Ever since the revolution of 1911, no government had enjoyed the confidence of the people, or possessed a clear title to rule. The "mandate of heaven" was not granted to those transitory régimes. Now at last, and for the first time in living history, a force had arisen powerful and ruthless enough to command the entire territory. The Chinese Communists regarded themselves as the true successors of the Manchus and the Taipings. They established a hierarchic rule, introduced the solemn cry, *Wan sui, wan sui* (May he live a thousand years), which had been reserved for the emperors and was now attributed to Mao Tse-tung and Stalin alone, set up their government offices within the Imperial City, whose red walls looked out upon an immense square especially constructed for the holding of parades, and they claimed as their own the territories which had once belonged to the Chinese emperors. The hierarchic character of the party was not based on Soviet rule: it was based upon the rule of the emperors, who were annually called upon to receive the "mandate of the people." Yuan Shih-kai had attempted to become emperor; Mao Tse-tung actually succeeded in being emperor. And there was the irony in the fact that Chiang Kai-shek

had claimed imperial powers, even ordering for himself, at the height of the war and during the months of his greatest defeats, replicas of the bronze urns which were fashioned for the ancient Chou emperors in their triumphs, and never succeeded in being anything else but a Japanese-trained drill sergeant, while the Hunanese peasant, apparently without any effort at all, stepped into the place occupied by the emperors of at least four dynasties. Such ironies commended themselves to the Chinese; and it was always in Mao Tse-tung's favor that he could make his adversary look ridiculous.

Meanwhile, in Communist China, the old imperial ambitions remain. The cry raised for self-determination by the students in their famous demonstration of May 4, 1921, is not apparently to apply to Tibet or Formosa, and one of the stranger characteristics of Chinese Communist ambitions is that they agree with Chiang Kai-shek in viewing all the territories that once paid tribute to the emperor as belonging to China. In *China's Destiny*, Chiang Kai-shek made it clear that he regarded Tibet, Annam, Korea, the Ryukyu Islands, North Burma up to the Hukawng River, and Formosa as part of the Chinese Empire. The Chinese Communists do not claim quite as much, but they claim nearly as much. Like Chiang Kai-shek, too, they appear to regard the Han, or Chinese, race as the superior partner in the mixture of races which form modern China, for the large gold star with its four attendant small stars on the flag can only represent China dominating the Tibetan, Mongol, Moham-medan, and Manchu races. For the present it would seem that primacy belongs to the Chinese. If so, the Chinese Communists could probably reply that they were merely behaving objectively and realistically; and in fact the government still consists largely of men from the Central Chinese plains. The recent Chinese revolution is indisputably Communist, but it has been marked with traits which are imperishably Chinese and was brought about largely by a small group of men from Hunan, a region famed for its traditional hostility to foreigners and toward the customs and fashions of the coast. It is for this reason that the study of Mao Tse-tung's life and background has become an indispensable corollary for an understanding of modern China.

How Communist, then, are the Chinese Communists? It depends,

of course, upon which definition of Communism is invoked—the Russian or the Chinese. Mao Tse-tung himself is inclined to use an ancient Confucian phrase, *Ta T'ung* (the Great Commonwealth), to describe “international communism,” as he envisages a period when “the dictatorship of the proletariat” will have been successful throughout the world. The phrase *Ta T'ung* has a respectable ancestry. It represents the *summum bonum* of ancient Chinese aspirations. It is recorded in the Confucian *Book of Rites* that the world will pass through three stages: the first of *hsiao k'ang*, or limited peace, the second of *t'ai p'ing*, or great peace, the third of *ta t'ung*, or great commonwealth. In this final stage the state disappears, there is universal equality, all punishments are abolished, for the sense of shame will be considered a sufficient deterrent to crime, and money will cease to have any meaning. This, at any rate, was the interpretation conveyed by the philosopher Kang Yu-wei, who profoundly influenced Mao Tse-tung in his youth. There is an evident similarity between this theory and Lenin's announced intention so to arrange the Russian state that the state will “wither away.” But the similarities end there: the nationalism of the Chinese is not something which can be spirited away, even though Liu Shao-chi, the secretary-general of the Chinese Communist party, a deputy premier and a theoretician second only to Mao Tse-tung, has inveighed against Chinese nationalism in his recent pamphlet “Nationalism and Internationalism.” There is no reason to believe that the Chinese Communists are happy with their Soviet advisers, or that they intend to form part of a closer union with the U.S.S.R. They have come to power by their own right, without more than token aid from abroad, in an environment far from the industrial proletariat, the Communist intellectuals of the cities, or the conferences and congresses of world Communism in other countries. They hammered out theories which are profoundly at variance with the theories of Russian Communism, and it is inconceivable that a Russian Communist would say, as Mao Tse-tung once said: “Marxism is worse than dung, if it is taken as dogma: our task is to find out what the people want.” The absence of internal feuds, treason trials, and heresy hunts, the extraordinary way in which they have succeeded in giving the Chinese people a sense of purpose, their retention of capitalism, the massive scale of their victory, all these suggest a con-



fidence in their power which derives from the knowledge of mass support, and it is unlikely that they will regard themselves permanently as the junior partners in world Communism. The Communist leaders do not read Russian. Mao Tse-tung had never been outside China until he went to Russia recently, and significantly he went *after*, not *before*, his triumph. Meanwhile, his published works have an authority equal to those of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin combined in all the Asiatic countries which have felt his influence. It is no longer a question of whether Mao Tse-tung may become the leader of Asiatic Communism. He *is* the leader, and it is a position he has occupied since 1936, when the Chinese Communist party found itself outside the Comintern.

The influence exerted by Mao's theories has been prodigious in India. Early in 1950 the Indian Communist party still regarded itself as the servant of Moscow, but as the months passed and the advice received from Moscow led to perpetual defeats, the strategy devised by Mao Tse-tung was finally accepted and the secretary-general of the party was forced to resign. In one of the last messages he wrote before his resignation, he said: "Under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung the Chinese Communists have successfully applied the teachings of Lenin and Stalin in the course of the victorious struggle for liberation of the Chinese people. The lessons of this victorious struggle will serve as an infallible compass for the Indian Communist party and the Indian working classes, who are responsible for the task of leading the national liberation struggle in India." The influence was clear. He had written a large number of editorials bitterly denouncing Mao Tse-tung.<sup>10</sup> His political theses had shown an almost willful misunderstanding of the rôle that could have been played by the Indian Communist party. It is conceivable that the whole west coast of India could have been brought under the control of the Communists if the split, which Ranadive brought about while he was secretary-general, had not occurred. Today the Indian Communist party is inclined to follow the Mao line to the exclusion of any other, though there is little likelihood that they will be able to infuse the same kind of imagination into the workings of the party; nor do they have the same feeling for the people.

<sup>10</sup> An account of the split in the Indian Communist party in 1950 is given later, in the chapter on India.

The Chinese Communist party came to power because the leaders possessed an imaginative understanding of "the broad masses of the people." Repeatedly Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi opposed the principle of dictatorial command. At the seventh National Congress of the Chinese Communist party in 1945, Liu Shao-chi declared in a speech later published under the title *On the Party*:

Some comrades have committed mistakes of commandism, adventurism and "closed-door-ism." Some, for instance, have been irresponsible towards the masses in their work. They did not believe it was the masses who were emancipating themselves. Instead, they stood above the masses to fight in their stead, to bestow emancipation upon the masses and to issue orders. Such comrades suffered from impetuosity. Being only superficially active, they did not know how to transform the party's slogans and tasks into those of the people, or how to enlighten the masses and properly wait for their awakening. Nor did they know how to take steps to bring about a natural revolutionary fervor among the people. They tried to compel the masses to accept the party's slogans and tasks simply by issuing arbitrary orders and forcing the masses into action. Thus they violated the voluntary principle of the masses. Particularly those slogans too advanced and policies too "left" had aroused doubts and dissatisfaction among the masses, and so they sought all the more to carry on their work by means of issuing orders, by coercion and even by punishment. The worst kind kept trying to find faults, shortcomings and bad examples, subjecting people to criticism, condemnation and punishment in order to frighten the masses and the cadres, and in order to push forward the work. They refused to find out the good points and the good examples; to study, develop and systematise them. They neither commended the heroes and model workers, nor recommended or disseminated the good experiences. They struck blows everywhere: everything was done by orders. Instead of learning from the masses and benefitting by the people's new ideas and inventions, they forced others to do things in their way, and so there was sometimes a serious isolation from the masses of the people, and the masses were resentful against them and even against the entire party.<sup>11</sup>

What is clear is that the Indian Communist party and many other Communist parties in the East suffer from the same defects that Liu Shao-chi was referring to in his speech. Commandism, adventurism and "closed-door-ism" were rampant within the Indian and Indonesian parties; it is conceivable that all parties in the Far East

<sup>11</sup> *People's China*, July 1, 1950.

will fail except the Chinese Communist party, simply because in none of them is there likely to be found the humanism which characterized the Chinese leadership.

The comparatively humanistic attitude among the Chinese leaders was noticeable shortly after the arrival at Yen-an; it arose perhaps from the decisive defeat in Kiangsi which led to the Long March. The Chinese Communists were continually urged to be "the selfless servants of the people—the people, and no other." "We must know how to serve the people and serve them well and not badly," wrote Liu Shao-chi. "We must be seriously responsible for them." It was an attitude which deserved praise, and one not to be found except in rare cases within the Kuomintang, but the simplicities of the Communist position conceal a perpetual dilemma. If service to the people was demanded to the exclusion of everything else, obedience to the party was demanded also to the exclusion of everything else; and in the same speech Liu Shao-chi refers to the iron discipline of the party, to be obeyed by all party members. "There must be no undermining of the discipline or the unity of the party on the pretext of assuming responsibility to the people." The dilemma was never resolved completely: it was one which would plague the Communists for a long time to come. The party is not always right, nor are the people always right, as Mao Tse-tung has frequently observed. When the party is only too evidently wrong, who shall be served?

In a sense, of course, the problem remains insoluble. It is the critical problem to be faced by all dictatorships, and the very existence of the dilemma proves that dictatorships are invalid. In human terms, which are the only ultimately viable terms, the problem is resolved with extreme simplicity: "We are responsible only to the people, and the party can go to hell."

One of the inevitable results of the dilemma has been a continuous "ideological remolding" of the Chinese Communist theory. The campaign directed against "the inclination toward dogmatism" in 1942, the campaign against the penetration by landlords within the party in 1947–1948, the change from a Communist "industrial economy" in 1949 to an "industrial and peasant economy" in 1950 were signs that the Communists were prepared to bow to the facts rather than mold the facts to suit themselves. They do not always do this. The Marxist

theory involved, for reasons which have never been sufficiently explained, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat were few in China, but the theory remained, with the result that in March, 1949, the Central Committee resolved to bring a third of the workers within the party in the next five years. It would have been wiser if they had concentrated upon bringing a third of the peasants within the party instead. In fact, the peasants were not remarkably eager to join the party. A report made by the secretary of the Northwest Bureau of the Central Committee stated that at the beginning of 1950 there were only 50,000 party members in an area populated by more than 23,000,000 persons.

The continual protests against "commandism" from the Communist High Command suggest that the authoritative habits are chiefly among the minor officials, but it is precisely there that the danger lies. If the policies of local officials remain doctrinaire and they continue to alienate popular support, these officials can sometimes remain in power for long intervals before the situation becomes known to higher authorities. There is no way to remove them. The old Chinese conceptions of the "imperial censorship" are not in force. The people, reading the local newspapers filled to overflowing with statistics of the sweeping successes of Communist reforms, with repeated praises of the Communist administration, and an almost insanely repetitious statement of class slogans, are easily bemused, and the local official can capitalize on their inexperience. The "doctrine" and the "belief in the masses" fight perpetual civil wars. The incorruptibility and general honesty and deep feeling for the masses of those in the highest authority can hardly be questioned; what can be questioned is the sincerity of the inexperienced local leaders, suddenly placed in positions of power, whose mistakes can only be corrected from above. In such cases the mistakes may never be corrected. In some cases the local officials are killed.

There are other characteristics of the Chinese Communist experiment which are equally dangerous. In an effort to convert large numbers of people to the Communist doctrine, and to discover the real feeling of the people, the Chinese Communists have adopted the Russian practice of seeking "confessions." Those who were not Communist confess their sins publicly and admit their mistakes. They also disavow publicly their connections with the past. So the son of

Dr. Hu Shih has publicly branded his famous father as "a running dog of Anglo-American imperialism," and other sons of famous fathers have enjoyed a temporary notoriety by divorcing themselves from them. The theme is not new. When the Chinese National Government severed its connection with the Soviet Union in 1929, the son of Chiang Kai-shek found himself a student in a Moscow University. Shortly afterward he made his public confession against his father, saying: "Chiang Kai-shek was my friend and my father. He still is my father but he is no longer my friend."<sup>12</sup> The declaration did not prevent the son from returning to join his father and take an active part in the Kuomintang and retire to Formosa with the remnants of the Kuomintang Army.

The method of the "confessions" was not invented by the Chinese Communists: it was already in existence under Chiang Kai-shek under a slightly different form. Under his régime all soldiers were ordered to keep notebooks. In these they were to enter their thoughts each day, and at the end of every week the notebooks were to be turned in to their officers.

Meanwhile, public confessions and disavowals are common in Communist China. Professor Fei Hsiao-tung has publicly disavowed his previous admiration for democracy as it was practiced in America and Britain. Professor Feng Yu-lan, less convincingly, has publicly disavowed his whole past life and proclaimed that his philosophical studies were based on a number of major errors. As he was one of the men most responsible for causing the students in Kunming in November, 1945, to return to the university when they had declared a strike against the Kuomintang, the change of heart suggested a desire for self-preservation rather than any real admiration for the Communist system, and even in his confessions the old, alarming pride remained:

I suddenly thought of the rôle I had played in Chinese philosophical circles. My writings served the function of giving a final glow to the old Chinese philosophy, just as the new Thomism does to the mediaeval philosophy of Europe. . . . Even some of my deeds which were not considered wrong were still motivated by a great deal of individualism and individual heroism. Therefore in the light of the moral standards of the

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Hindus, *The Great Offensive* (New York, Harrison Smith, 1933), p. 220.

new society they must be criticised. . . . The old Chinese philosophers shut themselves up in rooms for the purpose of introspection, imagining that ten fingers were pointed at them and that ten eyes were fixed upon them. But now the ten eyes and ten fingers are no longer imaginary but real. Millions of Chinese Communists are today practicing self-criticism and criticism, and they are also teaching hundreds of millions of their fellow countrymen to wield the same weapon of self-improvement. This is an unprecedented event.<sup>13</sup>

The arrogance, affirmed so often during the confession, hardly proved that the old black-bearded and frowning professor had changed either his manners or his way of looking at the world. He told a story of how two students, perturbed by his past career, had spent a sleepless night deliberating how they should reform him; in the morning they discovered that he intended to write an essay on self-criticism, with the deliberate intention of hoodwinking the authorities. It would seem, for the moment, that he had succeeded in hoodwinking both the authorities and himself.

The pride of Professor Feng Yu-lan was notably absent in Professor Lei Hsi-tung, one of the greatest of Chinese historians. He had believed in the past in strange cyclical theories of history, followed Spengler, and at one time edited a Kuomintang newspaper in Kunming famous for the historian's thunder at the Communists. A few months before the liberation of Peking he branded the whole revolutionary movement as "an adventurist act of hunger-stricken peasants," and the Chinese Communist party, once stripped of some of its foreign terms and slogans, as "little more than a semi-secret and fanatic sect." A year after the liberation of Peking he was sent out with a group of observers to make a tour of the countryside, accompanying Professor Feng Yu-lan, Hsu Peon, the painter, Yeh Chien-yu, the cartoonist, and Tsao Yu, the famous playwright. At the conclusion of the tour he wrote:

This was the turning point of my life. It was only then that I understood the bitter class conflict and cruel oppression that poisoned the life of these seemingly peaceful and harmonious villages. I began to understand how the revolution had achieved its successes under the leadership of the Communist Party, and my confidence in the future under that leadership grew.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, July 17, 1950.

<sup>14</sup> *People's China*, Aug. 1, 1950.

But though Professor Lei Hei-tsung's confession rang with an indisputable honesty, the danger of confession remained. Confession and denunciation lie close together. Intended to free people, these methods under certain circumstances only imprison them still deeper; and the methods themselves tend to preserve the hard core of doctrine by constant repetition. Such a hard core is occasionally, though rarely, noticeable in Mao Tse-tung himself. In a furious and uncharacteristic diatribe against liberalism, Mao Tse-tung wrote in 1937: "Liberalism in collective organizations is extremely harmful. It weakens solidarity, loosens relations, slows down work, diversifies opinion, deprives the revolutionary camp of its right organization and discipline." In the same speech he called upon Communists to denounce and report "the obvious misdeeds of acquaintances, relatives, schoolmates, intimate friends, loved ones." Finally, the liberal Communist is to be condemned for "forgetting he is a Communist party member and lowering himself to the level of the ordinary folk." But it was precisely the ordinary folk who brought him to power. Those who have met and observed Mao Tse-tung recognize the small place in his heart which is occupied by the rage against his enemies; but it is there nevertheless.

The doctrinaire symptoms in the Chinese Communist party—the symptoms which tend to make it an inhuman accomplice of the secret police—are probably far less important than they sometimes appear to foreign observers. The party still has its feet on the earth, and doctrine is still something which may be debated within wide limits. But it should be observed that in a free democracy there is no need for a perpetual parade of confessions and denunciations.

Where the Chinese Communists were strongest was precisely in their sense of the necessity of constant improvisation, in their refusal to accept cast-iron laws of conduct or behavior or theory. Planning, of course, was a necessity: there was the inevitable three-year plan announced by Mao Tse-tung on June 8, 1950; but planning in itself did not provide the only solution. A conference called by the Ministry of Heavy Industry early in 1950 stated that although the state-owned industry would provide the cornerstone for planning in 1951, private enterprise would participate "through placing of orders, giving out of processing, granting of credits, and through

other measures." The state was expected to move increasingly into the field of heavy industry as proprietor, but the process was assumed to be a slow process. "The conference," the report concluded, "was strongly of the view that it would be wrong to exaggerate the rôle of planning at the present stage of China's economy, owing to the fact that small commodity production and capitalist economy are still indispensable components within the economy." The Communists traded with the Nationalists on Formosa, sought industrial advice from Hong Kong, and refused completely to allow themselves to be driven into large-scale industrial projects at a time when their resources were needed for the production of consumers' commodities. It was this last element which probably showed more directly than any of the others the direction they were pursuing. The huge imports of textiles, dying and tanning materials, animal foodstuffs, and rubber goods through Hong Kong in the first seven months of 1950 suggested that they were not yet even dreaming of acquiring a massive heavy industry. The "go slow" policy was itself a sign of a fundamental disregard for doctrine, at the expense of human beings.

On one doctrine, however, the Communists were adamant. The doctrine was first announced at the First Congress of Chinese Soviets held in Kiangsi in 1932. There it was stated that the Chinese Communist party implicitly follows the direction of the Comintern. The Sino-Soviet Pact was the first official intimation received by the Western World that the doctrine remained unaltered.

For the Chinese the pact offered few advantages. It was a characteristically hard bargain, and except for the long-term credit of \$300,000,000 for rail and industrial equipment, it was charged with conditional clauses. The South Manchurian Railway would be returned to Chinese control, Soviet troops would leave Port Arthur, and Russia would surrender its interests in Dairen, but only after a peace treaty had been concluded with Japan, or, lacking that, at the end of 1952. The Russian Government had been incapable of the grand gesture. China was compelled to recognize the independence and sovereignty of the Mongolian People's Republic, though she has far greater historical claim to Mongolia than she has, for example, to Tibet. Once again, as under the czars, the Communist rulers were seeking to place China under their protection.



From loyalty to Stalin, Mao Tse-tung appears to have accepted the doctrine of implicit reliance on the Soviet foreign policy. Nothing the Soviets could do outside Russia was wrong. The internal policy of China differed from the internal policy of the U.S.S.R., but it was considered necessary that a broad united front should be shown to the outside world, and Mao Tse-tung proclaimed bluntly that the policy of "leaning to one side" would be maintained. There are, however, certain reserves to be made. Increasingly, Soviet foreign policy must be trimmed to take into account Chinese views, and this in itself is a fact of significance. For some years to come there will be an essential cleavage between the two nations, the cleavage which arises from the fact that the armed industrial proletariat conquered Russia for the Bolsheviks and the peasants conquered China for the Chinese Communists. The danger of the pact also lay in other directions. The promise of \$300,000,000 for industrial and railroad reconstruction implied the sending of Russian experts to China; it meant, too, adopting Soviet administrative techniques, Soviet methods of cost accounting, Soviet industrial blueprints. Inevitably there would be the equivalents of concessions. The Soviets have urged that Chinese heavy industries be centered around Manchuria and Sinkiang, both of these provinces lying beside the Russian frontier and therefore the easy prey of the Red Army should there be any differences between the two nations. There was the danger that China would be swallowed up by the Soviet Union. Yet the Chinese Communists could claim with some justice that the \$300,000,000 received from the Soviet Union would be spent more usefully than the \$2,000,000,000 given by America to the Chinese Nationalists, and there was comparatively little danger that four hundred million would be swallowed by a nation only half as numerous.

It is no doubt regrettable that the government which won the support of the Chinese people should be a Communist government aligned with Moscow. There were millions of Chinese who would have preferred a government which owed no loyalty to a foreign administration or a foreign doctrine; yet there were signs that once more, as so often in the past, the Chinese were absorbing a foreign doctrine only to transform it into something closer to the demands of the national ethos. China had not fundamentally changed.

Meanwhile, confusions and complexities remain. For the Western man the character of the Mao Tse-tung remains enigmatical. The scholar-soldier who spends half an hour each day writing in his spirited calligraphy scrolls for schools, writing, "To the sun! To liberty!" for a schoolhouse in Honan, and, "The revolution and the romantic imagination are the same," for a school in Shensi, is not the kind of man Americans will understand easily. His essential romanticism, the sharp intelligence steeped in ancient Chinese traditions, the brooding anarchism latent within him, his sense of the majesty of China's past, and the addiction to philosophical problems which led him to introduce his *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary Wars* with a study of the nature of reality, coming to the conclusion that "everything is objective reality except the mind," all these are things which are neither easily understood nor easily forgiven. That he has a greatness which Stalin can never acquire is perhaps dimly discerned; that he is a power of portentous significance is discerned less easily, if only because we have only recently become accustomed to regard the Chinese as possessing power at all. We are also apt to forget that his lieutenants are men trained in all the ceaseless improvisations of guerrilla warfare, possessing an intellectual stamina rare in any country. Finally, we forget that Mao Tse-tung has ruled over the destinies of the Chinese Communist party almost as long as Stalin has ruled over the Kremlin.

How, then, should Americans deal with this revolutionary situation?

China is not North Korea. There is no one in the Chinese Communist High Command who can be compared with the singularly inefficient General Choy Yong Kun, who appears to have been mainly responsible for the North Korean adventure. Though the Chinese and the Koreans have exchanged missions, and the power plants of the Yalu River feed southern Manchuria, their relations are not so close that they can be regarded as a single entity. Their conceptions of Communism differ: their agrarian reforms have essential differences. Where the Soviet Union is bankrupt of ideas, fossilized within an incompetent, powerful and ruthless bureaucracy, determined by the nature of its ideology to restrict the normal freedoms of the people to the uttermost, the Chinese Communists have shown that they were aware of the human needs of the people, and

their programs are constantly being changed to fit the circumstances. The center of Communist experiment is now Peking, not Moscow.

As the years pass there will be changes and modulations in the Communist pattern of China, but one thing is certain: the impact of Soviet Russia on the Western World has been prodigious, and the impact of China cannot be less. We cannot live our lives out as though the Chinese did not exist. The time when we could shrug our shoulders at terrible floods and droughts in China is over: sooner than we think, the concerns of the Chinese villagers will be our concerns.

The Chinese invasion of Korea has its origin in Chinese imperialism: to regard the invasion as the result of orders received from Moscow would be to underestimate the influence of an imperialism as ancient as China herself. The Chinese adventures in Tibet and Indochina follow the same pattern. Determined to secure the Chinese frontiers and defend the Chinese Empire, Mao Tse-tung finds himself playing the rôle of Robespierre as well as of Napoleon, with far vaster armies than the French revolutionaries ever possessed.

Yet it would be a mistake to despair over the Chinese Communist revolution. Inevitably the course of its adventures must come to a halt, for nothing of value is gained by the conquest of the neighboring countries: in time even the Chinese will come to learn the hazards of imperialism. When that time comes, China will have reached her maturity.

### III

## KOREA: The Morning Calm

Leopards break into the temple and drink the sacrificial chalices dry; this occurs repeatedly, again and again; finally it can be reckoned upon beforehand and becomes a part of the ceremony. —FRANZ KAFKA, *The Great Wall of China*

SEEING those old men in the voluminous white robes and tall black openwork hats, perpetually sucking at their long-stemmed pipes, removed from the world they contemplate with a Buddhist calm, we may be tempted to believe they belong to an unwarlike race, and it is easy to forget that the country has been the scene of a continual and merciless struggle for survival. The Korean word for "unity"—*Inmin*—a word which possesses extraordinary overtones in the ears of the Koreans, has been uttered continually, like a prayer, through at least sixteen hundred years. They are a people who half despise the Chinese, and they have nothing but contempt for the Japanese: the most famous of their folk songs, *Arilan Pass*, contains a chorus which celebrates the fragrance of the Korean thorn trees and compares them favorably with the scentless flowers of China, and of the Japanese the song says:

When in the past  
The barbarians came,  
On their bones the thorn tree flourished.

To the Koreans, even more than to the Chinese, all foreigners were barbarians.

To understand the present war, it is necessary to see it against the perspective of Korea's past history. First invaded by the Japanese Empress Jingo in the fourth century, Korea has suffered ceaseless invasions and occupations. For fifty years in the seventh century, the Chinese, with mercenaries from the half-nomad Kitans and Mongols, poured into Korea from the vast lands to the west of the Yalu River. Finally defeated at the battle of Willow Wall, they were forced back, and the brilliant Emperor T'ai Tsung, the founder of the T'ang dynasty, found himself powerless before the obstinate and determined resistance of a whole nation. The Chinese did not yet regard themselves as a nation; the Koreans did. They fought back vigorously, and when their walled cities were captured, they took to guerrilla warfare in the hills, waiting until winter and lack of provisions forced the invaders to withdraw. The invasion by the great Japanese Emperor Hideyoshi in the sixteenth century was hardly more successful. But where military power failed, diplomatic power succeeded; and in 1895, after the defeat of China by Japan, Korea was no longer in a position to defy the two great powers, Russia and Japan, who were determined to capture the warm-water ports of the Pacific and as much of the Asiatic mainland as possible. In May, 1896, there was signed between the Japanese and Russian foreign ministers an agreement by which they agreed to limit their penetration to the areas below and above the 38th parallel. The famous words were not mentioned in the actual agreement; they were, however, mentioned in the supporting documents and the memoranda.

Until the defeat of Russia by the Japanese in 1904, ten years after the defeat of China, Russia and Japan played a calculated game of "challenge-and-withdrawal" on the Korean peninsula. Following the policy of resolving all problems to their simplest terms, the Japanese strangled Queen Min in the palace at Seoul, for it was known that she was hostile to them. The Russians allowed the emperor to take refuge in the Russian legation at Seoul. Two years later the Russians had established a protectorate over Korea, for the king, lost within the immense consulate, had humbly requested Nicholas II to protect his state. Under the protectorate the country was flooded with a host of Russian advisers and adventurers. Timber concessions on the Yalu River, mining concessions in the rich territories of Ham-

gyong province, and later privileges in the port of Mosampo were the inevitable result of the request for "protection." A government friendly to the czar's government came into being, and all would have been well enough for the Russians if the king of Korea had behaved as everyone expected him to behave. In March, 1898, urged on by the Korean secret societies which had been in existence since the protectorate was announced, the king's attitude toward the Russians stiffened. He rejected all Russian demands, ordered Russian officers to leave the country, closed down the Russian-Korean Bank, and announced that he saw no reason that anyone except the Koreans should rule in their own land. He had calculated on the hostility between the Japanese and the Russians: Korea would become in a sense a buffer state between them, owing allegiance to neither. He had calculated well. Two weeks later the Russians and the Japanese came to an agreement by which each swore to respect Korea's independence.

All would have been peaceful if Mikhail Muraviëv, the Russian foreign minister, had not suddenly turned his attention to Manchuria and made it clear that he regarded this country, which he called "Yellow Russia," as the one province which Russia must possess at all costs in the Far East. The Korean king's determined effort to rid himself of the Russians was therefore successful. Muraviëv proclaimed that he sympathized with the king's desire for independence, and made plans for the conquest of Manchuria instead. But when the Russians left Korea, the Japanese observed the opportune vacuum and prepared quietly to take over the country.

The Russian adventure in Korea was not yet over. Just before the Korean king had announced his country's independence, two Russians, Count Vorontsov and Ivan Bezobrazov, both of whom had visited Korea, planned a remarkable "invasion in disguise." It occurred to them that it might be possible to take over the whole of Korea by sending 20,000 Russian soldiers disguised as lumberjacks through the northern forests. No one would be able to distinguish them from ordinary lumberjacks. They would work quietly within the forest concessions, then at the appropriate moment they would strike. It was a plan which might have been successful, and it was tried at least once again, in France. There the Spanish Communists who had escaped into France, under the command of General En-

rique Lister and a number of Soviet advisers, planned a *Putsch* which would have brought them to Barcelona and later to Madrid. About 50,000 of them, disguised as lumberjacks, were living in the Pyrenean forests throughout the period 1944-1950. At the end of the war they captured Toulouse and held power as far as the Spanish frontier, only to have their power removed from them by the French government. They returned to the Pyrenees with their arms, and the *Putsch* against Spain would probably have occurred in the late autumn of 1950 if the French government had not discovered the plot in the summer. Count Vorontsov's "lumberjack invasion" in 1900 was no more successful. The czar approved of it, concessions were acquired, the 20,000 disguised soldiers were dispatched to the forests, and they were still in training when the Japanese attacked the Russian maritime provinces in 1904.

The Russian policy toward Korea at the end of the century was confused and vacillating. In June, 1903, the czar wrote a memorandum explaining that he was prepared to surrender Korea to the Japanese. In February, 1904, he reversed his decision, and for the second time the ominous phrase "the 38th parallel" entered modern history. The czar telegraphed to General Eugene Alexeyev, his commander-in-chief in the Far East, at Port Arthur:

If the Japanese Navy should cross the 38th parallel on the western coast of Korea, with or without a landing, you are hereby given discretion to attack them without waiting for the first shot to be fired by their side. I rely upon you. God help you.<sup>1</sup>

Two days after the dispatch of the telegram, on February 10, 1904, the Japanese Navy, without a declaration of war and following exactly the same tactics to be employed later at Pearl Harbor, attacked the Russian fleet at anchor off Port Arthur.

Why had the czar chosen the passage of the Japanese fleet across the 38th parallel as a *casus belli*? Oddly enough, the archives of the czarist government have been thrown open and there exist reports of monumental discussions between the czar and his advisers, the choice of the 38th rather than the 39th or 37th remains mysterious. It was apparently a completely arbitrary choice; and if it was

<sup>1</sup> David J. Dallin, *The Rise of Russia in Asia* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1949), p. 77.

chosen for any reason at all, it was because by an accident of geography the coastline of Manchuria contiguous to Korea followed roughly the 40th parallel, and "the space of two parallels" could be regarded as allowing sufficient space for the lumberjacks to maneuver in. The czar wanted war. His minister of the interior, Plehve, had stated: "We need a small victorious war to stem the tide of revolution." The czar was in complete charge of the negotiations with the Japanese during the winter, and he relied largely on the advice of Count Vorontsov and the strange adventurer Ivan Bezobrazov, who had conceived the idea of taking Korea "by the spider's method." Ignorant and willful, possessing a peculiar veneration for everything that came from the East, the czar pursued a policy of conquest in the East against the advice of his foreign minister, Lamsdorff, and fell completely into the trap laid for him by Bezobrazov. Two other men were within the secret circle which the czar had brought together. One was Plehve, the complete reactionary, instigator of pogroms, and confirmed believer in Russia's rôle as "the emancipator of the East, even if the emancipation should be brought about by bayonets"; the other was the half-mad libertine Mikhail Muraviëv, who had first employed the term "the 38th parallel." The sending of the telegram made the war inevitable, for Japanese espionage in Russia was extensive; by some means a copy of the telegram was sent to Tokyo, arriving at the Japanese Naval Headquarters at the same time that it arrived at Port Arthur.

Russian policy in the Far East at the turn of the century was dictated by ignorant, resourceful, and improvident men. The evil genius of the war, Ivan Bezobrazov, did not buy the timber concessions in Korea because he believed in Russia as the emancipator of the East; he was simply an adventurer who demanded and received from the czar two million rubles to be spent on raising an army of lumberjacks, and without him it is unlikely that the Russo-Japanese War would have ever been fought.

With the defeat of Russia by the Japanese in 1904, the fate of Korea was sealed. For forty years, under varying degrees of tyranny, the Koreans lived under Japanese occupation. In 1919, when the king of Korea died, huge processions were held through the streets of Seoul, and there arose a mystical belief that with the death of the king the people would enter their inheritance as rulers of their



own country. They waved Korean flags openly and read a declaration of independence in all the cities and villages of the land, basing their claim on the doctrine of self-determination offered by President Wilson. The declaration read: "Our struggle is breaking the sleep of four hundred million Chinese. China will join with Korea, and India will also arise. This is a world movement, and it will continue." By the end of the day the Koreans learned that 7,000 Koreans had been killed and 50,000 had been imprisoned by the Japanese. They also learned that the doctrine of self-determination did not apply to Korea. Later they were to learn that it was not to apply to Korea even when the Japanese were defeated.

The tragic decision, agreed upon at the Yalta Conference, in February, 1945, to divide Korea between two zones north and south of the 38th parallel was made as the result of urgent Russian demands. At the time no one appears to have been conscious that the 38th parallel possessed an ominous significance, and that its historical origins went back to the era of Russia's disastrous defeat, yet it is clear from Stalin's speeches that it was precisely in order to avenge the defeat incurred during the Russo-Japanese War that he wanted his troops to march to the parallel. That the Koreans had been completely innocent bystanders in that war and that they had accepted the majority of the czar's demands either did not occur to him or appeared irrelevant. President Roosevelt accepted the frontier at the 38th parallel with the same incomprehensible guilelessness with which he accepted Stalin's demands that the Soviet Union should enjoy the same privileges in China as the Imperial Russian Government had enjoyed: the Chinese-Eastern and the Manchurian railroads were to be controlled by the Russians, and Port Arthur was to be leased to them as a naval base. These last two demands, addressed as they seemed to be from a conquering power to one who lies conquered, not revealed to the Chinese until some months later, could presumably be settled by an arrangement between China and the Soviet Union. The frontier at the 38th parallel, which had already received the secret blessing of the Yalta Conference, and which was to receive a more public blessing at Potsdam, when the Joint Chiefs of Staffs officially published the decision, had arisen without any of the leaders of the great powers consulting any Korean official, or any Korean at all.

A highly intelligent, graceful, and nationalistic people had lived for forty years under Japanese domination. The use of the Korean language had been forbidden to them; their newspapers were suppressed; they were not allowed to form gatherings of more than ten people without police permission; their religion was proscribed, and Shintoism was propagated among them; they were not allowed to belong to any trade unions; freedom of speech and assembly were suppressed. Their rage when they discovered that they were to be artificially divided between the two greatest powers was boundless, for it put an end to their dreams of unity.

In the early days of the occupation by Russia and America, they did their best to conceal their rage. From all over Korea they elected "people's committees," and from these committees delegates were sent to a national convention in Seoul called by Lyuh Woon Heung on September 6, 1945. The Koreans had not believed that military governments would be installed. They had imagined that the Russians and the Americans would seek out collaborators, disband the remnants of the Japanese occupation, and perhaps they would parade and make a few speeches; within six months they would be gone. In that mood the Koreans welcomed their liberators. To their surprise they found themselves, on both sides of the parallel, treated as though they were a defeated nation.

Why both the Russians and the Americans should have behaved in this way is a mystery which has never been solved. The Russians were more tactful. They never set up a formal military government, while the Americans not only set up a formal military government but allowed the Japanese, under General Abe, to retain office "in order to prevent chaos." The naked idiocy of the directive, coupled with the equally naked idiocy of the Japanese, who fired on a crowd of Koreans who were demonstrating their joy at being liberated, marked the beginning of the occupation. There were other mistakes later, but so many errors at the beginning of the occupation left a taste in the mouth of the Koreans which was never forgotten. The Russians were hardly more successful. They allowed Cho Man Sik, a venerable old Christian patriot who wore traditional Korean costume and who had long ago given up the practice of law to devote himself to passive resistance against the Japanese, to remain as chairman of the northern government for five months. He was the

man who might have brought about the unification of the country. When in January, 1946, Kim Il Sung was brought from Yanan to Pyongyang, it became perfectly clear that they were installing a puppet chairman. Soon the hand of Moscow was felt everywhere. By order of the government every male between sixteen and sixty had to carry a special passport and declare his unconditional support of the Moscow Declaration on Trusteeship, which provided for "the reestablishment of Korea as an independent state and the creation of conditions for developing the country on a democratic basis." There was to be a Joint Commission of American and Soviet advisers working in cooperation with a provisional Korean democratic government.

This strangely unreal document—for no provisional Korean democratic government came into existence, and no one ever discovered precisely what was meant by "developing the country on a democratic basis"—led to constant conflict between the governing powers. Both believed in the course of time that they had roots in the country they occupied, but both were generally hated. The Russians, who claimed that everyone almost without exception in the northern part of the country had voted for the puppet government they had placed in power, were surprised to observe that Russian soldiers were being killed after dark by Koreans. Americans were also killed after dark by Koreans. It was hardly surprising. All the resources of propaganda were being employed to convince North Koreans that their best protectors were Russians, and South Koreans that their best protectors were Americans. Soon enough the Koreans would have to accept a double protection, or there would be war.

The last thing the Koreans ever desired was double protection. The passion for unification was ingrown. Mr. K. P. S. Menon, the former Indian ambassador to China, later India's foreign secretary and later still head of the United Nations Commission to Korea, reported to the United Nations General Assembly:

Deep down in the heart of every Korean, whether in the north or in the south, is this longing for unity. I feel that if only the Koreans are left to themselves—not merely in name but in reality—they will work out their own salvation and establish their own democratic Government. . . . What has obstructed progress is the 38th parallel. If a Government in South Korea cannot be national in a geographical or political sense, it can-

not also be national in a political sense, that is, in the sense that it can normally defend itself against aggression without foreign assistance.

The Koreans were not left to themselves. Desperate for unity, they would probably have preferred a united Korea under either of the protecting powers to a Korea split between the two. By the end of 1949 Korean tempers were exasperated. On both sides there were irresponsible men secretly or openly threatening war. Syngman Rhee, who had spent forty years in America and who had been given the presidency of South Korea in the most dubious way, with almost no roots in the country, declared repeatedly that he would lead his troops over the 38th parallel. The provocation was extreme, but provocation itself was no excuse for a war. The man who was most responsible for bringing the war about is virtually unknown—his name was Choy Yong Kun, and he was minister of defense under the North Korean Government.

The discovery that a middle-aged adventurer called Ivan Bezobrazov was responsible for the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War was only made possible by the publication of the official and unofficial czarist documents by the Bolsheviks fourteen years later. The guilt of Choy Yong Kun is revealed with an alarming candor by the publications of the North Korean Government itself. From these publications it is possible to reconstruct the preparations for the war which broke out in June, 1950.

At some time toward the end of January or the beginning of February, a conference was held, probably at Pyongyang or Vladivostok, attended by Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, Molotov, Kim Il Sung, General Choy Yong Kun, and Pak Heung Yung. There may have been a number of observers from Peking. No public announcement of the meeting was made, and the conference can only be inferred by events which happened shortly afterward. The five participants mentioned above compose the irreducible minimum of those who possessed authority to make final decisions, with power to sway the Politburo and the Cominform. The presence of Chinese observers can be inferred from the fact that in January, 1950, Mao Tse-tung was being regarded for the first time by the Russians as the theoretician who had most completely understood the nature of the Communist revolution as it affected Asia. Rodion Malinovsky

was commander of Soviet forces in the Far East. Kim Il Sung, a short, heavily built man with large brown eyes and a deceptive calm, with a far greater physical charm than most of the photographs published in the West would suggest, was premier of North Korea, a position he owed to Russian influence. He had visited Moscow, and in the hierarchy of Communist leaders in the Far East he was probably the one most trusted by Moscow until the sudden emergence of Mao Tse-tung as an official Communist spokesman at the beginning of the year. Choy Yong Kun was a man of entirely different caliber. Where Kim Il Sung was a self-trained guerrilla leader, who had headed the Korean revolutionary forces in Manchuria since the age of eighteen, Choy Yong Kun was the pure staff officer. He had been trained in the Whampoa Military Academy; he had been a brigade commander in the New Fourth Army of the Chinese Communists; and he had little knowledge of Korea. He had spent most of his life in China. He held the post of minister of internal defense, and he was leader of the People's Democratic party in North Korea. After the outbreak of the war he was removed from this post, apparently on the grounds that his estimate of the opposing forces had been proved erroneous, and nothing that he said or did suggests that he had taken American intervention into consideration. Pak Heung Yung was the most intelligent Korean of the three. He was the one whose roots were deepest in Korea. A short, dark, rugged man, with a nervous twitch in his eyes and a brooding manner, he represented the completely dedicated revolutionary. He had helped to found the Korean Communist party in 1921. He had spent nine—some say, eleven—years in prison in the hands of the Japanese. He had been tortured. After a visit to Moscow to recover from torture, he had returned secretly to Korea, where he worked as a bricklayer. He possessed, unlike the majority of Koreans in high positions, the faculty of being able to compromise and induce others to compromise; he was minister of foreign affairs.

It is a fair guess that at the secret meeting the progress of guerrilla activities in South Korea was passed under review. Throughout the autumn and winter of 1949, the North Koreans had been expecting eagerly in the South an intensification of guerrilla warfare. The Americans, who numbered 77,643 in October, 1945, had been

withdrawn in the summer, leaving only about 500 men in charge of a small-scale training program. With the South Korean Government virtually defenseless, the activities of the guerrillas increased. The North Korean Government made no secret of these activities. It helped to arm the guerrillas, and openly published maps showing the positions of the guerrilla forces. How accurately the maps represented the effective strength of the guerrillas is unknown, but there is no doubt that there were guerrilla strongholds in the Otai, Sopaik, and Chiri mountains, which range from north to south and form the mountainous heart of the state of South Korea. The two most powerful guerrilla centers were in the Otai mountains, which lie close to the 38th parallel, and were therefore in a position to receive smuggled arms from the north, and the Chiri mountains in the south, where the guerrilla forces had received reinforcements from a part of the Fourteenth Regiment of the South Korean Army, which had revolted in October, 1948, following orders to mobilize for a punitive expedition against the guerrillas on Chenju Island. About 3,000 officers and soldiers from this regiment had seized a train at Yosu, attacked Soonchon, instituted soviets, and then joined the peasant guerrillas in the mountains, so providing a formidable fighting force. This was the first organized revolt involving South Korean soldiers. Seven months previously, in April, 1948, the islanders of Chenju had revolted en masse, and it was to put down this particular rebellion that the garrison at Yosu had been ordered to embark for Chenju. The revolt of the islanders was completely successful. It was not inspired by the Communists. It grew out of the traditional anarchism of the peasants, and it was very largely led by the women, expert divers for shells, who attacked the garrisons on the island with the sharp knives used for hacking molluscs from the sea bed and with antiquated rifles. This strange and beautiful island, with its high cliffs and turbulent seacoast, declared its independence, and repeated attempts by the South Korean Government to subdue it completely failed. A year after the revolt, Sihng Sung Mo, then minister of internal affairs, later to become defense minister, declared: "The guerrillas in Chenju have excellent training and strong organization. Six hundred of them could withstand six thousand experienced regular troops. They move swiftly in the best organized manner. In addition it is estimated that 15,000 persons are giving them assistance."

The rebellion on Chenju Island, however, could have little effect on the sporadic guerrilla war fought over large areas of South Korea. Sealed off from the mainland by naval convoys, the islanders continued to fight from their bases in the mountains, while the stone walls interlocking the fields against high winds gave them the same kind of protection which was afforded to the American irregulars when they fought the British on the road from Concord Bridge to Boston.

Meanwhile, the guerrilla fighting on the mainland gained in intensity. Police posts were captured in sudden raids, title deeds were burned, village soviets were elected, and the guerrillas vanished in the mountain mists whenever the regular soldiers appeared. The guerrillas exerted little real political authority. They were waiting their time. Though they claimed that two-thirds of the countryside was effectively under their political control, they probably controlled less than a sixth, and even this control was often illusory, extending only among the villages in the foothills. But the threat was there. For centuries rebels against the government had taken refuge in those mountains, and the example of the Chinese Communists, who had also begun their ascent to power with small groups of guerrilla fighters in the mountains, was enough to make Syngman Rhee cautious in his dealings with the peasant soviets. For the most part his armies lay close to the large cities. Only small disciplinary forces consisting of detachments of police were sent out against the guerrillas, with orders to exterminate the soviets ruthlessly.

During the years 1946-1949, the Communists in South Korea were attempting to pass through all the stages of a rebellion which the Chinese Communists accomplished over a period of twenty-two years. These Communists possessed advantages which the Chinese Communists had never had. They were in command of three mountain strongholds, from which they could deploy in any direction they pleased, and they were under no necessity of performing a Long March. The illfated Heilofeng Soviet in China, which had been ruled by women, was paralleled by the revolt in Chenju, and the defection of the Fourteenth Regiment looked extraordinarily like the uprising of the Twentieth Kuomintang Army under Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing in 1927. What is surprising is that so little was known abroad about these incessant guerrilla activities, for even if

they were neither so effective nor so exuberant as the North Koreans maintained, they were a factor of quite extraordinary importance in the unfolding political situation of South Korea.

Viewing the guerrilla situation in the south, and perhaps misled by their own propaganda, the Government of North Korea appears to have been convinced by the autumn of 1949 that the south would eventually fall like a ripe plum into the hands of the guerrillas. Throughout the whole of that year, though there were continual incitements to rebellion, there is no indication that Kim Il Sung planned armed intervention.

The year had begun peacefully enough with the inevitable visit to Moscow in February. At a cabinet meeting held on February 19, shortly after the North Korean Government had requested an audience with Stalin, Kim Il Sung tabled three issues he had decided to take up with the Soviet Union. They were: (1) an agreement for economic, technological, and cultural assistance; (2) the import of machinery and spare parts from the Soviet Union; and (3) the establishment of credits in order to control the prices of imported goods. A few days later he flew with six members of his cabinet from Pyongyang to Moscow, where he was closeted with Molotov and treated with considerable honor, for he was, after all, the first of the Far Eastern Communist leaders to make the pilgrimage. During his audience in the Kremlin, Stalin explained briefly the attitude of the Soviet Union to the Republic of North Korea. Stalin passed in review the history of Russian-Korean relations, castigated czarist Russia and Japan for their predatory attempts to wrestle over the possession of Korea, and declared that with the coming of Lenin the Soviet people had denounced colonialism for all time. "We are fighting," said Stalin, "for the equal rights of all the peoples against the conquests of other nations." Kim Il Sung expressed his satisfaction at Stalin's "generous attitude," and a few days later a commercial agreement was signed. The Government of North Korea was promised credits amounting to 212 million rubles, to be paid over a period of three years beginning July 1, 1949, and to be repaid at 2 per cent interest during the three years following July 1, 1952. The interest was exactly twice that demanded a year later from the People's Government of China.

There is no reason to believe that any military or paramilitary



alliance was concluded during this visit. General Choy Yong Kun was notably absent from the mission. The North Korean Government was still overwhelmed with the technical problems arising from the chaotic condition of North Korean industries, sabotaged by the Japanese and partly destroyed by the Russians, who had behaved there exactly as they had behaved in Manchuria, removing whole factories northward. It is clear from Kim Il Sung's speeches that he was passionately interested in reviving industry, for otherwise he would be faced with mounting discontent, and he was determined to make North Korea a strong industrial nation. Together with the credits, Stalin also promised an enormous increase of trade between the Soviet Union and Korea. How large this increase was to be can be seen from the figures which Kim Il Sung announced shortly after his return. He envisaged a tenfold increase in trade over a period of five years:

1946	74,052,000 rubles	(100)
1947	148,400,000 rubles	(204)
1948	264,905,000 rubles	(357.7)
1949	337,040,000 rubles	(456.5) (estimated)
1950	684,210,000 rubles	(937.5) (estimated)

These statistics were not broken down, and it is impossible to determine whether they did, in fact, include payment for military assistance. Kim Il Sung stated that the greater part of the trade was in textiles, locomotives, and machinery, and though it is conceivable that payment for offensive weapons was included, there are considerations which suggest that the greater part of the imports was devoted to reconstruction. The tenor of Kim Il Sung's speeches throughout the year was one of quiet satisfaction in the increasing industrial power of North Korea. He was continually paying tribute to the trade unions and the technicians, among whom he included the 25,700 technical students who were being trained in the new universities and colleges, most of them on scholarships provided by the government. He pointed to the new medical schools and clinics then being established, and the extraordinarily low figures he quotes—only eleven clinics were established in 1948—point to the strains through which the country was passing. Workers were praised by name; inefficient managers were rebuked. The Heungnam Fertilizer

Factory had completed its schedule a month earlier than expected. The workers in an iron foundry were to be congratulated because they had completed their schedule three days earlier than expected. Swamps had been drained. New roads had been built. More students were attending the colleges. The trade unions, after some initial errors, were now to be allowed to expand prodigiously. He points to the increasing educational facilities among the peasants, and in a manner familiar to readers of Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny*, he lost himself among vast figures, quotas, and percentages, and he even enumerated the exact number of newspapers, magazines, and books to be produced in 1950. Altogether, counting all the separate issues, he expected that 235,000,000 copies of newspapers, 5,400,000 copies of magazines, and 7,850,000 copies of books would be published in 1950. It is possible that his delight in these huge figures was an indication of his increasing distrust of men, for the megalomania of Communist commissars often takes the form of an adoration of vast numbers. Yet it would be unfair to accuse him of anything more than a natural excitement at the prospect of a complete industrial reconstruction. He had himself designed the state seal, and it was characteristic of him, and of his government, that he should choose a seal which contained, within a ring of ears of rice, the representation of a huge electric power plant surmounted by a red star throwing down its rays.

From the innumerable speeches delivered by Kim Il Sung during 1949, two things are clear: a growing economic dependence upon the Soviet Union and a general exhilaration as the new power plants go up. Occasionally, but less often than one might expect, there are organ notes of veneration of Stalin, who had been described in the famous letter written on silk and stated to be signed with 16,767,680 signatures as "the greatest genius of mankind and the savior of the Korean people." This letter, occupying thirty crates, had been sent to Moscow shortly before Kim Il Sung's visit, and the close cooperation between North Korea and the Soviet Union was evidenced by the statement: "As the sacred mountain of Pak-du, lifting its white-capped peak to the blue sky, looks towards the crests of the Urals, so the friendship between the Korean and Soviet peoples will endure eternally."<sup>2</sup> It was a strange letter, suggesting in its phrasing a curi-

<sup>2</sup> *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 18, 1949.

ously oriental sense of superiority, and could be read as a masterpiece of subtle self-praise. And there was no doubt that the worship of Stalin had become an essential part of the state religion in North Korea.

Kim Il Sung's speeches deserve to be read with care. They show a command of detail and the problems of government hardly to be expected from a former guerrilla leader. They have none of Mao Tse-tung's brilliance, there are no flashes of mordant humor, no appeals to the gallery. They explain in remarkable detail the failures and successes on the industrial front. Significantly, he refers continually to the quotas of 1950 and never even guesses at the quotas for 1951. These speeches suggest the inescapable conclusion that he did not expect North Korea to be sufficiently mobilized on the industrial front for an invasion of South Korea until at least the beginning of 1951. Then, with the hydroelectric power deriving from the dams on the Yalu River on the Korean-Soviet border, with a network of industries at his command and a population educated to immediate acceptance of a Communist way of life, with technicians rolling out of the colleges and technical schools, and with the marshes drained, so that agriculturally North Korea could regard itself as independent of the south, the year of decision might come. There is no indication at all that he visualized in his speech delivered in November, full of a minute examination of the innumerable industrial failures in the north, that a little more than six months later the weight of North Korea would be launched against the south.

There is one other characteristic of Kim Il Sung's speeches which deserves comment. He rarely, if ever, makes any allusion to the unification of the country, which was so vociferously demanded by other members of the government, and he never mentions the uprisings and riots which on the evidence of the South Koreans themselves were continually occurring.

The attitude of the North Korean Government toward the South Korean Government can be gathered from a speech made by Huh Hurn, the chairman of the South Korea Labor party, which was actually part of the Communist party of North Korea, though it possessed ramifications in the south. Huh Hurn was a close associate of Pak Heung Yung, who regarded himself as a member of the same party. In this speech, delivered exactly a year before the invasion, a

few days before the withdrawal of American occupation troops in accordance with the United Nations agreement of December 12, 1948, Huh Hurn drew a picture of the unrest in the south. He mentioned the short-lived Taegu uprising of October, 1946, the general strike in March, 1947, and the revolt of the Yosu garrison in October, 1948. He inveighed against the arbitrary arrests and murders committed by the South Korean police, and then he announced the policy which he expected the South Korean revolutionaries to follow. It was a very simple policy, based upon a traditional theme, the same policy which two generations of Koreans had employed against the Japanese. He said:

That terrorism must be answered with terrorism has now become a truth that people in southern Korea have clearly grasped from their own experience. They have come to the conclusion that unless terrorism is answered with terrorism, they are destined to suffer once more the prospect of being a nation without a country, the permanent slaves of the aggressors.

The implications were clear: the government of Syngman Rhee was to be destroyed by assassinations and uprisings, by the people already living in the south. Other speeches made during the summer made exactly the same demands. In the autumn there was still considerable talk of peaceful reconstruction in the north, and Vice Premier Hong Myung Hei stated at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Korean People's Democratic Republic on September 8, 1949, that he intended "with great pride" to introduce compulsory free universal education on September 1, 1950. This was only one more of the quotas intended for that year, which was to see compulsory free universal education abandoned in place of compulsory universal military service.

There were, however, toward the end of the year occasional ominous underscorings. Kim Il Sung spoke in September of the "well organized, well disciplined People's Army, strong enough to defend the fatherland and safeguard by force the people's struggle for unification." He repeated the statement in November in almost exactly the same terms. There was nothing particularly unusual in this statement. If it was a threat, it was a guarded one, and could mean

everything or nothing. The first signs of the danger ahead appeared in a radio communication from Peking heard by the United Press in Hong Kong. The Peking radio reported that guerrillas in South Korea were "swiftly growing into a strong force" and it claimed that guerrilla war was being waged "over nearly all of South Korea." The dispatch, which was dated January 27, 1950, went on to claim that guerrillas operated in six South Korean provinces and could muster 90,000 men. It claimed also that during the summer months the guerrillas had killed 8,000 South Korean troops, and that increasing numbers of soldiers were joining the guerrilla ranks. On the same day it was announced in Seoul that a mutual defense-assistance pact had been signed between the United States and Korea, making South Korea eligible for its share of the \$27,000,000 fund intended to strengthen the armed forces of Korea, the Philippines, Iran, and other states in Southeast Asia. Another agreement signed on the same day legalized the presence in South Korea of the Korean Military Advisory Group of the United States Army.

It is in the nature of things impossible to prove that the decision to invade South Korea was made about this time, but all the evidence shows that the temper of the North Korean Government suddenly changed. To the North Koreans it appeared that the Americans, having withdrawn at midnight on June 30, 1949, were either about to return in force or to equip the South Korean Army on an unprecedented scale. Reports of guerrilla uprisings, possibly exaggerated, were pouring into Pyongyang. Syngman Rhee's government, which had been steadily weakening, and had long ago lost the support of the majority of the people, might regain some of its lost influence if the Americans returned. It was conceivable that if the Americans insisted on large-scale changes within the government and the introduction of long overdue social reforms, the frontier between North and South would prove to be impassable and the dream of a united Korea under a Communist government would have to be abandoned. Syngman Rhee had threatened on a number of occasions to attack the North, and in the complicated dialectics of the Communist leaders it may have seemed preferable to risk an invasion now rather than suffer invasion later. An immense number of incommensurable factors had to be weighed and tested. Syngman

Rhee's mutual defense-assistance pact could be regarded as provocation. What is certain is that immediately after January 27, 1950, the theory of a peaceful 1950 was abandoned, and it is hardly likely that the North Korean Government would have permitted itself to talk so resolutely of a coming war without at least the provisional safeguard of some kind of military alliance with the Soviet Union. Molotov was known to be in the Far East about this time. Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, the general who had commanded the Russian troops who entered Korea, was now in command of the Soviet forces in the Far East. It may be presumed that every effort was made by the Russians to convince the North Koreans of the necessity of capturing South Korea in the shortest possible time, and dazzling promises were offered to the North Koreans if they undertook the venture. The agreement or pact was probably signed within the eleven days following January 27, for on February 8th, on the second anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army, General Choy Yong Kun, the minister of defense, made a speech which demonstrated that all hope of a *levée en masse* had been abandoned, and that from now on force, and force alone, would be employed to solve the problem of unification.

General Choy Yong Kun's speech, delivered before a mass rally in Pyongyang, outlined in considerable detail the plan of attack. He made no secret of the fact that the North Koreans possessed tanks in large numbers and would use them. The speech included only the briefest mention of the guerrillas in the south. He spoke at length of positional warfare, admitting the lack of seasoned commanding officers but stressing the large numbers of noncommissioned officers who were in training. He passed in review the large numbers of border incidents which had occurred, and following the practice of Kim Il Sung he deliberately named a dozen noncommissioned officers who had shown resourcefulness during the border encounters. He praised the military strategy of Stalin, and he saw himself in the military rôle of a new Stalin opposed by hordes of fascists in the south.

The speech should be quoted at some length because here, for the first time, there appears, only faintly camouflaged, the outline of the coming invasion. Here there is no talk of a reign of terror against terror. Instead, there is an appeal to naked war. He said:

Today, the Korean people regard the People's Army as the only military guarantee of victory in their just struggle for peaceful unification of the fatherland. While our compatriots in the south live under a system of dark, fascist police terror, they draw their inspiration from the Korean People's Army, for they consider this army to be the decisive military force which will eventually liberate them.

Our People's Army, our garrisons and the Peace Preservation Corps have grown to maturity; this fact is attested by their technical development and the increase in their fighting power.

As everyone knows, the characteristics of modern war are large-scale military operations, the use of powerful weapons and immense powers of endurance. In other words the army of today requires new weapons, particularly tanks, airplanes, and automatic weapons of many kinds. In the words of Generalissimo Joseph Stalin, who is as great a military commander as he is an organiser and leader, "In modern warfare the infantry will find it very difficult to fight without tanks and without sufficient air-cover." "Modern war," he has also stated, "is a war of machines."

As such, modern warfare is complicated: it is conducted through close tactical coordination between various mechanised forces.

Our People's Army is fully equipped with infantry, motorised units, artillery units, tank units and an air force, while the Korean People's Army firmly guards the coasts.

They are all equipped with the latest weapons.

Those who are in the service of the People's Army, the garrisons and the Peace Preservation Corps have achieved and are achieving great results in their struggle to master the excellent weapons of all descriptions they have received from the people. . . .

The history of our Army is short, there are very few seasoned military experts who have been disciplined in combat, but our fellow officers are now learning Soviet military science, which is the most advanced and scientific among all nations, and they are being armed with the combat experience of the heroic Soviet Army.

Soviet military science is based on Marxism and Leninism. It was brought into being, and has been developed by Generalissimo Stalin, the great military leader and strategist. The invincibility of the Soviet Army was amply proved during World War II.

Our People's Army is equipped with all the characteristics of a modern standing army. . . .

The discipline of our People's Army is entirely different from that of the *bourgeois* army, since the latter is maintained by means of the beating, jailing, torturing of the people, and of other repressive measures. . . .

Stripped of its repressive measures, such a *bourgeois* army will melt away overnight, but the discipline of our People's Army is a self-awakening discipline firmly based on the lofty spirit of self-sacrifice for the fatherland and the people, and on the fact that every serviceman in our People's Army clearly recognises the justness of his duty. . . .

The regime of Syngman Rhee can be maintained only under the aegis of guns and bayonets of the United States Army: it is nothing but a "paper house," which stands on a shaky foundation. This "paper house" will collapse at any time. Who can deny that this puppet regime is tantamount to a volcano which has begun to erupt?

History shows that no army which is boycotted by the people and completely isolated from the people has ever won a victory, nor will it win a victory in the future.

Our People's Army is armed with a revolutionary patriotism of the former anti-Japanese partisan troops under the command of Premier General Kim Il Sung. It is also armed with the strategy and tactics and the combat experiences of these revolutionary partisans who struck the numerically superior enemy forces with terror, for General Kim Il Sung's partisans always fought with arms they had seized from their enemies. . . .

It is not armed strength alone which constitutes our superiority as one of the factors favorable to our final victory.

The world situation is developing favorably for us. Time is flowing in favor of the people. The world situation and the current of history guarantee the people's victory as time flows. Thus, the reactionaries and the people's enemies are fast heading towards their ruin. . . .

Throughout colonial and semi-colonial countries the national emancipation movement against the imperialist plunderers is being vigorously pursued, and in every country the world over the militant labor movement is gaining in strength, while the peace movement against the policy of the imperialists who want to set the spark to World War III is spreading to every nook and corner throughout the world on an unprecedented scale and with an unprecedented vigor. . . .

In proportion as the strength of peace and democracy and socialism is growing stronger, the camp of imperialism and war is growing weaker. . . .

However, we should not be intoxicated or conceited with victory and success, nor can we afford to indulge in such self-intoxication and self-conceit.

In this connection Lenin and Stalin taught: First, do not be tempted by victory; secondly, let victory stay as it is; and thirdly, crush the enemy to the bitter end. . . .

The traitors are dreaming of seizing the land from the peasants, the peasants in North Korea who are the owners of the land, so that the land



thus seized may be returned to the former landowners. They are attempting to return to pro-Japanese collaborators and national traitors those important industries which belong to the state and the people. They are indulging in a phantasmagoria to deprive the workers in North Korea of the benefits of the progressive Labor Law, which provides for an 8-hour day and social security, and to deprive the women of their legal equality with men, and to deprive cultural workers of all their freedoms and the conditions which enable them to demonstrate fully their creative abilities for the fatherland and the people.

Such being the case, the entire Korean people must rise in the solemn struggle for the salvation of the fatherland. . . .

The guerrillas in South Korea are deeply and widely rooted among the masses of the people because they were born out of them. The traitors claim to be "subduing" and "annihilating" the guerrillas, but the truth of the matter is that the guerrillas, instead of being "subdued" and "annihilated" are growing steadily stronger. Therefore, it is not the guerrillas but the traitor Syngman Rhee who will eventually be annihilated, for these traitors have planted in the hearts of the people grievances and hatred which will be forever remembered and cursed by the Korean people for generation upon generation. . . .

To our People's Army, garrisons and Peace Preservation Corps therefore the entire people must, in time and sufficiently, supply adequate weapons, bullets, foodstuffs, uniforms, and all other necessary materials. At the same time they must strengthen the work of assisting the families of the servicemen and participate, with more enthusiasm, in the activities of the Society to Support the National Defence of the Fatherland. Simultaneously we must extend our assistance and encouragement, both material and spiritual, to the people and guerrillas in the south who are carrying on a heroic armed struggle against a savage reign of terror, tortures and massacres.

We can and must accomplish this task.

The speech of General Choy Yong Kun has been quoted at considerable length because it contains the seeds of the disaster which followed in June, and it is by far the most revealing of the documents published by North Korea in the six months before the outbreak of the war. It foreshadowed the future and gave clear indications of the kind of war which would break out. Hidden within the speech are a number of direct quotations from Mao Tse-tung, and in one place General Choy Yong Kun refers directly to the declaration made by Malenkov in October, 1949, on the thirty-

second anniversary of the October revolution, when he prophesied that World War III would "transform the capitalist countries into their own grave," and gave as a reason for this astonishing statement the fact that Communism had increased its land areas with every war since 1917. There is therefore a kind of marriage between the attitudes of Chinese Communism and Soviet Communism, and it is clear that the marriage is never completely consummated. Throughout the speech the two separate forms of Communism, never completely reconciled, are brought together, confronted with one another, made to appear similar, when in fact they are completely different, and even, in some contexts, opposed to one another. But in general the speech demonstrates that General Choy Yong Kun had decided that positional warfare and guerrilla warfare could be carried on together, that he was not altogether sure of the enthusiasm of the people and was attempting to stimulate their will to combat, and that there were considerable dangers in carrying on a war with an insufficient number of commissioned and experienced officers. He admitted that a Soviet military advisory group was assisting the People's Army, and that the Soviet Government was supplying tanks and airplanes to the People's Army. The whole tenor of the speech suggests that war was close and desired by the minister of defense, and that it would take the form of an armored invasion, with tanks and airplanes, at a moment when the guerrilla uprisings in the south made invasion convenient, or when a border incident offered a convenient excuse. At one point in the speech he enumerated 1,863 border infractions and incidents committed by the army of South Korea. "All these invasions," he declared, "were successfully repulsed, 6,000 enemy troops were annihilated, 5,000 were wounded, and 100 taken prisoner. Our soldiers captured over 80 guns, over 200 machine guns, over 5,000 carbines, over 1,000 shells, and many hundreds of thousands of bullets." Since he gave the number of opposing troops as 60,000, he was claiming that the North Korean militia had successfully dealt with nearly a fifth of the whole. How many border incidents there really were we shall never know. The experience of Sudetenland and Azerbaijan has shown that they can be improvised whenever necessary. But these border incidents were a factor of great importance: they exasperated the existing tensions, and it is clear that they were embarked

upon by both sides with the deliberate intention of exasperating an already sufficiently exasperated situation. According to the official United Nations Reports, some 18,000 people were killed in frontier and guerrilla fighting in the two years preceding the outbreak of the war.

General Choy Yong Kun's speech, which was not printed in any American newspapers at the time, though it deserved to have been published with flaming headlines,<sup>3</sup> was presented with considerable skill, and not the least of the inferences to be drawn from it was his own consuming ambition. Now at last, in those early days of February, the theme of the drama which was to unfold during the summer was being announced. The speech resembled the hammerings of carpenters on a darkened stage, or the three drumbeats which in France traditionally herald the lifting of the curtains.

Six days before the speech was delivered, the American secretary of defense, Louis A. Johnson, declared, "If the Soviet Union starts something at 4:00 A.M., the fighting power of the United States will be on the job at 5:00 A.M." If he had known what was happening in the council chambers at Pyongyang, he might not have boasted so openly, for what the North Koreans clearly intended was an invasion so sudden that the United States would have been unable to intervene until too late.

Today the errors committed by General Choy Yong Kun are clear, and his greatest error, perhaps forced upon him by his Soviet military advisers, lay in the decision to use heavy armored divisions in a country which would allow the passage of tanks, but where they possessed little maneuverability. All the implications of his speech suggest a determination to introduce a blitzkrieg on the Nazi model, using guerrillas as supporting forces. Clearly, he had learned from the experience of the Chinese Communists in 1948-1949, and it seemed to him that the huge mechanized procession of captured armaments which had appeared in the Red Square in Peking when the Chinese People's Republic was inaugurated provided the clue to the war of the future in Asia. But the Chinese Communists in fight-

<sup>3</sup> The speech appears in four issues of *Korean Independence*, beginning May 24, 1950, and concluding on June 14, 1950. *Korean Independence*, printed half in English and half in Korean, is published in Los Angeles. Formerly a bitter opponent of both Soviet and American intervention, it now follows the party line.

ing the Kuomintang had found that the captured weapons were lacking in mobility: they made no use of anti-aircraft guns because they were difficult to transport, and they had no need of tanks to pursue the Kuomintang forces into the hinterland. Having a smaller area to conquer, possessing a considerable number of Russian tanks already, and with more to come, General Choy Yong Kun played with the idea of a blitzkrieg, using heavy Soviet weapons, and though there were initial successes, he blundered. If there had been no tanks, the war could have been disguised more easily, and the troops coming over the frontier would have been able to say, with a greater semblance of truth, that they had come on the invitation of the guerrillas in the south and that they were themselves guerrillas. Two other guerrilla wars had been fought successfully: one in Indochina and one in Indonesia. The second had led to the complete independence of the country, and the first had led the French in 1946 to recognize the state of Viet-Nam under Ho Chih-minh's leadership. The Chinese Communist victories had been themselves largely guerrilla victories, where the guerrillas were to be counted in millions. There was no precedent in Asia for the kind of war Choy Yong Kun was attempting to fight, and it was almost axiomatic that a war fought on the Asiatic mainland for social causes must in the nature of things be a guerrilla war, with the peasants themselves in authority. Once it is no longer a guerrilla war, it tends to be a war where the interests of the peasants are subsidiary to the interests of the army and the bureaucracy in power.

All this needs to be repeated, for mistakes of endless consequence have been made on both sides in Korea. General Choy Yong Kun claimed that his army was essentially a popular army. It was not. It was an army of conscripts, with a comparatively few highly skilled technicians in command of the tanks and heavy guns, and above these were the Soviet military advisers prepared to regard Korea, as the Nazis regarded Spain, as a testing ground for new methods in warfare. The problem was simple: Can the blitzkrieg be married to a peasant war? The processions in the Red Square in Peking had suggested the possibility, but they had done no more than suggest the possibility. At the beginning the heavily armored Russian tanks had broken through the ranks of the South Korean defenders. Thereafter their importance decreased. The real war was not the posi-

tional war. The real successes of the North Koreans arose from their use of guerrillas, survivors of Kim Il Sung's border raids against the Japanese and those who had entrenched themselves in the fastnesses of the South Korean mountains. What is singular is that the American forces apparently knew nothing of these guerrilla tactics, made no preparations against them until the war was well advanced, and allowed the refugees to surge through their lines, when it should have been evident that this was part of the war plan of the enemy. Not until October, 1950, were American soldiers given training in guerrilla war.

A month after the outbreak of the war, General Choy Yong Kun was removed from his post. To a considerable extent he had engineered the war, and his removal was a measure of his failure. He had hoped by the use of tanks to reach Pusan within a month or less, and it was largely because he employed tanks and agreed so avidly to the advice of the Soviet military advisers that he failed. Once again, as in 1933, when a German Communist known as Li Teh had advised the Chinese Communist armies with disastrous effect, a foreign adviser had helped to destroy an Asiatic army.

With the dramatic speech delivered on the main square of Pyongyang in February, the stage was set for the adventures ahead. All that was needed was something which could be labeled a provocation, and if the guerrilla uprisings increased in intensity, some means could be found in which the guerrillas would introduce their own shadow government, and this government in turn could demand the immediate assistance of North Korean forces.

The upsurge in guerrilla activity did not take place for a variety of reasons.

"Provocations," however, were continual. Syngman Rhee's government had long since proved itself inept. Syngman Rhee had spent forty years of his life abroad and had few roots in the country. Swayed, like Chiang Kai-shek, by the passion to unify his country, relying heavily on American advice, married to an Austrian wife who was inordinately ambitious, out of touch with the people, he behaved like a dictator and openly threatened the North Korean Government with invasion at a time when it should have been clear that his own army was inadequate even to defend the frontier. Early in March he ordered the arrest of thirteen members of the National

Assembly who protested against his threats to invade North Korea. They were members of the South Korean Labor party, of which Huh Hurn and Pak Heung Yung were the leaders. The thirteen members were found guilty of violating the National Security Act and were sentenced to prison terms ranging from one and a half to ten years. Their crime, according to the *New York Times* correspondent in Seoul, was that they had petitioned the United Nations for the withdrawal of foreign troops, attempted to bring about the fall of the cabinet by exposing malfeasance on the part of its members, sought out unnecessary items in the budget in order to fight the budget bill in the Assembly, opposed invasion of North Korea by South Korean forces, and pressed for constitutional revision.<sup>4</sup> The real reasons for their arrest were not hard to find. It was known that a vote to limit Syngman Rhee's powers was about to be taken. By removing these members of the National Assembly, it would be impossible to have a majority favoring the amendment. The vote was actually 79 for the amendment, 13 against. But a two-thirds vote was needed if Syngman Rhee's powers were to be curbed. The total number of members in the National Assembly was 123. Two-thirds of this would be 82. By the loss of three votes, the National Assembly found itself unable to introduce an amendment which had received a majority of votes, and Syngman Rhee was confirmed in his powers. The *New York Times* correspondent concluded his report with the observation: "Two points of interest to observe here which do not appear to have been dealt with by the prosecution are: (1) the question of the Assemblymen's constitutional immunity for actions in the Assembly; (2) the protection under international law of those making a plea to a United States Commission within that Commission's term of reference." The situation was serious, and was made more serious by Syngman Rhee's apparent determination to wage war even if the National Assembly forbade it. On March 2 he told the Korean people that despite the advice given by "friends from across the seas" not to attack the "foreign puppets" in North Korea, the cries of "our brothers in distress" in the north could not be ignored. "To this call we shall respond."<sup>5</sup>

The situation was now developing rapidly and inevitably toward

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times*, March 14, 1950.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, March 2, 1950.

war. It was as though both sides were fatally dedicated to war and could no longer avoid war even if they wanted to. On May 10 Sinh Sung Mo, defense minister of South Korea, warned South Korea that invasion by Communist North Korea was imminent. His intelligence reports indicated that North Koreans were moving in force toward the border. He asserted that the North Korean Army totaled 183,000 trained men, had 173 airplanes, 173 tanks, and 32 naval vessels, and was supported by 9,000 guerrillas together with constabulary and youth corps groups.<sup>6</sup> He appeared to be alarmed by the large size and the heavy equipment of the army. He had not been so alarmed six months previously. On November 1, 1949, he had deplored the attitude of American advisers who insisted that South Korea was totally unprepared for war. "If we had our own way we would, I'm sure, have started up already," he told a press conference. "But we had to wait until the Americans were ready. They keep telling us: 'No, no, no, wait. You are not ready.'" He concluded the press conference with the alarming statement, "We are strong enough to march up and take Pyongyang within a few days."<sup>7</sup>

The extraordinary irresponsibility of the defense minister, capable of making so casual a threat at a press conference, was equaled only by the irresponsibility of Syngman Rhee himself, who continued to threaten invasion long after it became clear that North Korea possessed overwhelming reserves and could destroy the South Korean Army without great difficulty. The South Korean Army had 100,000 men in training, about thirty airplanes and as many tanks, and no useful guerrilla fighters. The American military advisers thought otherwise. Either because they were infused with the blind optimism of Syngman Rhee's cabinet or because they were misinformed on the nature of the North Korean army or because they were totally unprepared to envisage the consequences of guerrilla war, they stated that the South Korean Army was in excellent fighting trim. On May 30 General William L. Roberts, head of the United States military mission, informed a press conference in Seoul that the South Korean Army was well trained and equipped, and that "he would

<sup>6</sup> Associated Press dispatch from Seoul, May 10, 1950. These figures turned out to be remarkably accurate, except for the understandable error regarding the guerrillas, who do not lend themselves to an easy counting.

<sup>7</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1949.

not hesitate to place any battalion of these soldiers bodily in the American Army." He discounted the possibility of attack from the north, saying: "But at this point we rather invite it. It will give us target practice."<sup>8</sup> Six days later he told Marguerite Higgins that "the Korean Military Advisory Group is a living demonstration of how an intelligent and intensive investment of 500 combat-hardened men and officers can train 100,000 guys who will do the shooting for them."<sup>9</sup> The inadequacy and presumption of these statements becomes even more mysterious when it is learned that by June 1, ten days before he was transferred to the United States, General Roberts's intelligence had discovered that North Korean civilians had been cleared out of a five-mile band along the 38th parallel and that the North Korean Army had suddenly been vastly increased. General Roberts added, in a speech delivered in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Los Angeles, that he found "nothing unusual" in the fact that he received no reply to his urgent messages to the War Department.<sup>10</sup>

At the beginning of June the pot was beginning to boil over. On May 31, 8,300,000 South Korean voters went to the polls. Though Syngman Rhee's party commanded large sums of money, and though there was considerable evidence that the police threatened voters, and some 90 opposition candidates had been jailed, the presence of a United Nations Commission prevented the election from being bungled. Of the electorate, 86 per cent went to the polls. Nearly two-thirds of the candidates for election ran as independents. When the votes were counted, Syngman Rhee found himself firmly repudiated. The independents had won 130 out of the 213 seats. The anti-Rhee Democratic Nationalist party had won 23. The six parties committed to support the president commanded only 50 seats. Syngman Rhee no longer possessed any right to represent his nation.<sup>11</sup> But the sudden rise of the independents could also be construed as a blow struck against interference by North Korea, and the strangely

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, May 30, 1950.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, June 5, 1950.

<sup>10</sup> *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 23, 1950.

<sup>11</sup> *Time*, June 12, 1950. *Time's* figures are substantially accurate, but other reports, including one published by *Korean Independence*, which need not be accused of bias in this connection, indicated that the administration candidates received 48 seats, and the opposition candidates numbered 162.



named Central Committee of the Democratic Front for the Unification of the Fatherland <sup>12</sup> announced in Pyongyang on June 7, shortly after the votes had been counted, that the election had been mismanaged, and proposed that it should be declared void. At the same time it proposed that general elections should be held throughout South and North Korea from August 5-8, and that the first plenary session of the All-Korea Legislature should be convened in Seoul on August 15, the fifth anniversary of the liberation of Korea. This was a more statesmanlike suggestion, and might, at another time and under different auspices, have led to a solution of the problem, but there is considerable evidence that the appeal for general elections throughout the country broadcast by the Pyongyang radio were part of an intensified phase of propaganda, and meanwhile the North Korean army was moving toward the frontier. The United Nations Commission reported to the Security Council that there was "an ostensible change in the North's previous attitude," and described how it had sent its representative, Mr. John Gaillard, to the parallel on June 10 to see the text of the proposals. Three envoys from the north, Lee In Kyuo, Kim Tai Hong, and Kim Jai Chang, crossed the parallel on the morning of June 10 and were immediately arrested by orders of Syngman Rhee. According to the United Nations Commission report, the three envoys were "immediately placed under detention by the Southern authorities, who have since tried to induce them to switch sides by showing them the facts in the south." Nothing more has ever been heard of them.

The action of arresting the three envoys bearing the text of the Pyongyang resolutions could be regarded by the North Korean Government as one more provocation. To the United Nations Commission it seemed one of the least necessary of all. The disappearance of the three envoys at Yohyun railway depot on the parallel could not be compared with other provocations—Syngman Rhee had officially appointed the governors of the northern provinces, giving them residences near the South Gate at Seoul, and he possessed his own groups of guerrilla forces in the North, some of whom appear to have been responsible for an uprising in Haejo in January, 1949—but it was a provocation of some substance and showed an alarming

<sup>12</sup> The Committee was inaugurated in Pyongyang on June 25, 1949. The date is possibly significant.

disregard for the popular desire for unification. The last possibility of peaceful unification seems to have vanished at this point. The result of this incident was a renewed radio war between North and South, and in the middle of the disturbance Mr. John Foster Dulles arrived in Seoul. In time the provocation arising from the arrest of the envoys was forgotten, and Mr. Dulles was himself to become, according to the Pyongyang and the Moscow radios, the most serious provocation of all. Why an innocent Republican should have been chosen to fill this rôle has never been fully explained, though the same technique of vituperation was employed once before under equally menacing circumstances. This happened when in 1941 Sir Stafford Cripps disclosed to the Kremlin that the German armies were moving toward the Russian frontier, and the mere disclosure was regarded as provocation of extreme magnitude.

The inexplicable adventure of Mr. John Foster Dulles belonged, however, to the future. In the seething propaganda war between North and South Korea, an air of unreality obtained. Everyone knew that the country was rushing into civil war, everyone spoke of peace, everyone could see that only a miracle would save the situation, everyone knew that the propaganda campaigns on both sides were "screens," and everyone knew, or should have known, that neither government had been freely elected. On June 16 the Central Committee of the Democratic Front for the Unification of the Fatherland interjected an inevitable protest regarding the arrests, calling for the "elimination" of Syngman Rhee, requesting the Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea to work for "peaceful unification," and urging a nation-wide struggle for the release of the three envoys. This resolution was clearly calculated to inflame the South Korean Government, but except for the often repeated demand that Syngman Rhee should be removed, a demand which the majority of Koreans would probably have accepted, it contained no concrete proposals. These proposals, after being worked on carefully by the North Korean Government, were announced three days later:

(1) In order to bring about unification, the legislative assemblies of North and South Korea should be united.

(2) The All-Korea Legislative Assembly shall adopt the Constitution of the Republic and bring into being the government of the Republic.

(3) On the basis of the Constitution of the Republic, a general election should be held to elect representatives to the All-Korea Legislative Assembly.

(4) In order to create conditions for the peaceful unification of the Fatherland and to allow the All-Korea Legislative Assembly to work properly,

- (A) The following arch-criminals and enemies of the Korean people who are obstructing the peaceful unification of the Fatherland should be arrested: Syngman Rhee, Kim Sung Soo, Lee Bum Suk, Sihn Sung Mo, Tsai Byung Duk, Pak Sung Wook, Cho Byung Ok, Yun Chi Yun and Cynn Heung Woo. These are the national traitors.<sup>13</sup>
- (B) Freedom of speech, press, assembly, demonstration and mass rally should be guaranteed.
- (C) Suppression of the democratic political parties and social organisations and their activities shall cease. All political prisoners shall be released. Freedom of all democratic political parties shall be guaranteed.

(5) The Government brought into being by the Legislative Assembly shall organise the existing armies, police and security forces of North and South Korea into a single force. The reorganisation shall be carried out on the basis of democratic principles.

(6) The United Nations Commission on Korea should be requested to withdraw from the soil of our Fatherland as speedily as possible, because it is being utilised as a tool of those who are determined to divide and enslave our Fatherland.

(7) All these measures should be completed by August 15, 1950, the fifth anniversary of our liberation from the Japanese yoke.

(8) If the South Korea National Assembly agrees with these proposals, the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Korean People's Democratic Republic are ready to send its representatives to Seoul on June 21, 1950, to negotiate with the South Korea National Assembly, or to receive in Pyongyang the representatives of the South Korea National Assembly. The South Korea National Assembly should guarantee the inviolability and safety of the representatives of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Korean People's Democratic Republic. At the same time the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Demo-

<sup>13</sup> The "national traitors" virtually included the entire South Korean Government.

cratic Republic will guarantee the inviolability and safety of the representatives of the South Korea National Assembly.<sup>14</sup>

The document, which possesses in the history of the Korean war an importance second only to the declaration of General Choy Yong Kun in February, was signed by Kim Doo Bong, the chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly in the North, an old scholar of the Korean language who had spent some years in Yenan, and Kang Ryang Wook, the general secretary of the Standing Committee, an old church leader who had followed a traditional Korean pattern of gravitating from the church into revolutionary activity. They were men who were well known and highly regarded in the South. It is doubtful, however, whether the document was actually written by them, and it seems to have been written after consultation with Kim Il Sung and his vice premier, Kim Chek.

The document, which at first appears to suggest concrete proposals, appears on closer examination to be unnecessarily evasive. Nothing new is proposed. The number and choice of the envoys is omitted, and though stringent guarantees are accepted and demanded, there is a curiously unreal air in the request concerning the envoys. It is as though the arrests of the three envoys shortly before had been conveniently forgotten. The clause relating to the United Nations Commission is gratuitous. The North Korean Government had refused to allow the Commission to enter North Korea, and had already stated a sufficient number of times that it regarded the "so-called" Commission as illegal, on grounds which were never made clear. The clauses relating to guarantees of free speech and mass rally could only benefit the Northern government. Oddly enough, Syngman Rhee was not to be "eliminated," but to be arrested and placed on trial: the trial would presumably form the first dramatic act of the new government once it assumed power. As a practical solution to an intolerable impasse, the proposals with their authoritarian overtones could hardly commend themselves to Syngman Rhee, who possessed authoritarian leanings of his own. They would also hardly commend themselves to the independents in the National

<sup>14</sup> *Korean Independence*, July 12, 1950, which also published in the same issue the text of the resolution issued by the Fatherland Front on June 16, 1950.

Assembly. In any case, they were not intended to be more than a gesture. Under cover of dark the tanks were rumbling toward the 38th parallel.

Probably it was already too late to avert the tragedy. The governments of North and South Korea, and of the Soviet Union and America, had maneuvered themselves blindly into untenable positions. All sides in the conflict were guilty of astounding crimes. The North Koreans were guilty of a reckless act of premeditated aggression, and the fact that General Choy Yong Kun had openly announced the aggressive intentions of North Korea in February did not make the aggression any less criminal. The South Korean Government had committed a series of provocations and had uttered innumerable threats which it was powerless to carry out; it had forfeited the confidence of the country and it represented nothing but a small group of self-seeking and ignorant men. The American Government, by refusing to allow Communist China a seat at the Security Council, and later by refusing to listen to any spokesman from North Korea, had shown a remarkable misunderstanding of the forces working in the Far East; and by casting its protection over the Kuomintang in Formosa it had shown a peculiar and deep-centered blindness, for the purpose of protecting the Kuomintang on Formosa could only be the recapture of China, and against the thought of another red rake being drawn across the whole of China from south to north, the Chinese would rebel; and the Chinese Communist involvement in the Korean war became inevitable from the time when the American government sent its warships into Formosan waters. Mr. Truman rested his case on the statement delivered three years before, that the United States Government would permit no further aggressions in the Far East; and if the decision was admirable, the circumstances, which were partly of his own manufacture, could hardly have been more unfortunate. The most evil, because the most cunning of the four, was the Government of the Soviet Union, which clearly prompted and directed the aggression. But the major evil does not excuse the minor evils, and if the gravest fault of the American Government was its reckless uncertainty of intentions—the House of Representatives, for example, voting in January, 1950, by a margin of one vote not to grant economic aid to South Korea, and then in February reversing the decision by a majority of over a hun-

dred votes—its sins of omission were often as grave as the sins it committed. When, at 4:00 A.M. in the morning of June 25, the heavy, squat tanks lumbered across the 38th parallel, none of the four nations involved could give themselves credit for having intelligently attempted to solve a complex problem. The resort to arms was a measure of the failure not of one but of all.

In nearly all beginnings of wars there occur moments of terrible irony. One such moment occurred at the very second when the war broke out, for the decision to cross the parallel at this time seems to have had some direct connection with Defense Secretary Louis A. Johnson's unhappy remark in February. Thereafter tragic irony came quick and fast. The spectacle of the North Korean Government attempting to justify premeditated invasion on the grounds that thirteen peasants and one policeman had been wounded, and another policeman had been killed, in Cu Bek Sung county between 12:25 A.M. of June 23 and 10:00 A.M. of June 24, after the South Korean Army had lobbed two hundred mortar shells over the frontier, would be laughable if it was not so tragically serious. This claim was actually made.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps only the North Koreans were in a position to appreciate how the death of a single policeman, never identified, led to the greatest massacre known in their country. A more pathetic irony occurred somewhere in the depths of the Moscow propaganda machine. Moscow radio broadcast on June 21 a statement concerning Mr. John Foster Dulles, "whose arrival [in South Korea] makes it clear that the American imperialists have ordered Syngman Rhee to prevent peaceful unification at all costs, and to provoke civil war in order to complete the establishment of United States domination in South Korea." An observer, accustomed to the

<sup>15</sup> Quoted from *Soviet Russia Today*, August, 1950. The complete dispatch of the Korean Central Telegraphic Agency reads: "Two days before they launched an attack north of the 38th parallel, troops of the South Korean puppet government continuously bombarded Bek Sung, county town in Hwang Hai province of North Korea, with artillery fire. They shelled Dai Dong in Cu Bek Sung county with more than 200 shells from 125 millimeter howitzers and 81-mm. mortars from 10 P.M. on June 23 to 4 A.M. on June 24. More than 200 howitzer and mortar shells were fired on the Ka Ga Ku area of Bok Shing county from 12:25 A.M. on June 23. More than 200 shells were also fired on the Ka Ga Yu area from 6 to 10 A.M. on June 24. Scores of peasant homesteads in the Ben Sung region were demolished by the shelling, while 13 peasants were wounded. Six policemen of the republic were wounded and one killed."

methods of the Soviet radio, could be forgiven if he waited patiently after the invasion for the inevitable deduction to be made. It was made. On July 8, two weeks after the war had begun, Moscow at last discovered the man responsible for the catastrophe. *Pravda*, reproducing a photograph taken by an American cameraman, declared:

As already reported, John Foster Dulles, adviser to the United States State Department, visited South Korea a few days before the invasion of the territory of the Korean People's Democratic Republic by the South Korean forces. Dulles was verifying the preparedness of the South Korean forces for an attack on North Korea.

An American correspondent photographed Dulles on the border between North and South Korea. Dulles is standing in a trench. He is examining a map of the sectors where the provocative attack by the South Korean forces on the frontier regions of the Korean People's Democratic Republic is shortly to take place.

But though irony abounded, the savage tragedy of the Korean war was of a kind which chilled the soul, for there was no question of which side was right or which side was wrong: both governments were guilty of outrageous crimes, both had acquired totalitarian powers, both were moved by forces over which they had no control. Unless the reporters of the reputable New York newspapers were lying—and there was no reason to believe they were lying—the government of Syngman Rhee belonged to that strange group of corrupt governments which have appeared in the East at moments of desperate crisis, governments which seem to have nothing in common with the people they rule, archaic survivals from a feudal past, compounded of a small group of men who have never in any real sense been elected by the people, the rich mercenaries of power who employ power for gain: it is possible that these comprador governments would never have come to power without foreign interference within the internal politics of the nations they rule. The brutality of Syngman Rhee's police, the assassinations which he ordered, the long and devious ways in which he imposed his rule suggested he was a man in whom no one could have confidence; and Mr. Acheson's repeated warnings to him seem never to have been listened to.

Because they committed a wanton act of aggression, the North

Koreans put themselves out of court. Yet, until June 25, there was a case for the North Korean Government. It is a case which should be examined with great care. It is true that the government was saturated with Russian influence: the Government of South Korea was saturated with American influence. With more understanding of Asiatic psychology than the Americans possessed, the Russians had not imposed formal military government, and they had insisted that the land be divided among the peasants. By April 1, 1946, the distribution of the land, which had begun three weeks earlier, was completed, and the spring sowing on the newly acquired lands begun. The land-reform laws were sweeping. All Japanese lands, whether public or private, all the land owned by landowners who possessed more than twelve acres, all lands of churches exceeding twelve acres were given to the village committees to distribute according to the number of people in the farm families and the number of adult workers. Landlords were not allowed to own more than twelve acres, and they could possess these only in some other district, where their traditional influence had not been felt. Some 724,522 farming families acquired land in this way, more than half of them had been sharecroppers. Before the land reform the average holding was half an acre; afterward it was five acres.<sup>16</sup> What had happened was a complete revolution in the agrarian districts, and whatever else the North Korean Government accomplished, it had made it virtually impossible for landlords to exert their influence any longer. The land had been thrown open to the peasants to the extent of 2,500,000 acres. Industry was set on its feet, a law was passed giving equality to women, schools were built; and if the hand of the dictatorship fell heavily on landlords, as indeed it did—Miss Anna Louise Strong records that of the 70,000 landlords in North Korea, only 3,500 took advantage of the offer to acquire land in districts other than their own, implying that the rest simply fled the country—the peasants had never enjoyed the prosperity they enjoyed now. Debts to landlords were canceled: seed was supplied where necessary by the government. Kim Il Sung had learned the

<sup>16</sup> Anna Louise Strong, *Inside North Korea* (privately printed, 1950), p. 26. Though Dr. Strong's account is strongly biased, there is no reason to disbelieve the figures she gives, and the general accuracy of her picture of North Korea can be substantiated from other sources.



lesson which had been learned by the Chinese Communists: give the land to the peasants, then you will have them on your side.

The American Military Government acted with considerably less speed. The sale of lands formerly owned by the Japanese to the peasants did not take place until two years later; the plots were not sold until the end of the summer of 1948, when 598,000 Korean farm families were given the opportunity to buy the lands at a price equivalent to three times the average annual yield, with fifteen years in which to complete the purchase. Assuming that the land had to be sold at all (though an extremely good case could have been made for giving it freely to the peasants on the grounds that they had paid excessive rents for generations), the distribution was fair, and was brought about in the face of continual opposition from the South Korean Interim Assembly. A strange and sullen conspiracy had been formed to deny the passage of the legislation, even though this legislation was desperately needed; and though all the members of the Assembly publicly approved of the measures, the members repeatedly left the floor when the land bill came up.<sup>17</sup> On March 22, 1948, the military governor signed a general ordinance empowering the National Land Administration to divide the lands. The tragedy was that the ordinance was not put into effect two years before.

The Assembly, dominated by landlords, seems to have done everything in its power to maintain the landlord's feudal privileges. No peasant felt safe in his ownership of the land. Having accepted and paid for the land through the National Land Administration, he would be visited by the landlords' agents, threatened by the landlords' militia, and made to pay rents as though he had no title to the land. Only 15 per cent of the lands in South Korea had been in Japanese hands, or in the hands of landlords substituting for Japanese. The landlords in the remaining areas retained their power and openly derided the ordinances which restricted the payment of rent to no more than a third of the crop. Though the American reforms were carefully planned, they failed in three separate directions: (1) they came too late, (2) they affected comparatively few peasants, (3) the landlords disregarded the reforms and wherever possible

<sup>17</sup> Clyde Mitchell, *Foreign Agriculture*, October, 1948. Clyde Mitchell was the head of the National Land Administration, and his account is authoritative.

behaved as though they had not taken place. The inevitable result was a series of peasant uprisings.

Within the American Military Government men had played with reform; they had bowed to the landlords; they had allowed the secret police full powers; they had frowned on the Socialists who continually demanded wider land reforms; they had tolerated the inflation, the black market, and the consumer-goods shortages; and they were apparently incapable of preventing the ministers of the South Korean Government from repeatedly threatening to invade the North. It was in such an atmosphere that Syngman Rhee found himself on June 25, 1950, and it is at least permissible to believe that he regarded the invasion as an act of Providence designed to allow him to perpetuate his power, for he was assured of American help, or at least he could regard American help as exceedingly likely.

When the war came, and the South Korean army reeled back, seven hundred hastily equipped American soldiers transported from Tokyo and Okinawa were thrown into the fighting. They were annihilated.

The tragedy of the early days of the war lay precisely here: unpreparedness and vacillation in Washington were the chief causes of the initial defeats, and as the North Korean army, provided with tanks so strongly armored that ordinary bazookas could not destroy them, drove down across South Korea, ignorance of guerrilla strategies only added to the confusion. Yet there is a sense in which those initial defeats were blessings in disguise. America is traditionally incapable of fighting a war unless she is wantonly attacked; and there followed during July and August, 1950, a peculiar change in the attitude of America to the rise of Communism in Asia. The theory of "containment," which had been senseless from the beginning, was now abandoned: the armed might of Communism was now to be thrown back. America possessed no available technique for dealing with Communism as a social philosophy or as a mythology penetrating among the Asiatic masses; she did, however, possess a technique for dealing with an armed enemy. For the first time since the end of World War II, and five years too late, America was showing that she possessed a sense of responsibility toward the renascent nations of Asia.

But if the sense of responsibility was growing, it suffered from serious limitations: the Government of South Korea had aroused the hatred and sullen resentment of the majority of the people; unfortunately it was this government which America was sworn to defend. With the army which landed on the shores of Korea, there came no new social philosophy, no quickening revolutionary fervor, no hint that the responsibility of America lay in other directions besides its armed force. The land regained from the North Koreans was not distributed to the peasants, while the landlords were even assured that their rights of tenure remained. Also, the American military command tacitly assented to the brutality of the South Korean police and the South Korean marines. "They murder," wrote John Osborne in a famous issue of *Life*, "to save themselves the trouble of escorting prisoners to the rear; they murder civilians simply to get them out of the way, or to avoid the trouble of searching and cross-examining them. And they extort information . . . by means so brutal that they cannot be described." At a time when the enemy was continually infiltrating South Korean armies, it is possible that their acts were thought to be excusable; they were not excusable; and whenever the democracies find themselves fighting in such a way that civilians are murdered *simply to get them out of the way*, then it becomes perfectly clear that a tragedy of incalculable proportions is taking place, for Korea might be won by the United Nations only to be lost to the criminal police.

The absence of any social philosophy to implement the work of the United Nations was another tragedy. The United Nations had come into being as a purely political organization; in June it acquired military power, but it was still to acquire a social philosophy. It may have seemed too much to ask that the soldiers who fight under the United Nations flag should possess a social philosophy which they actively propagate, but nothing less than a social philosophy will give the United Nations the power to affect the masses of the people. It must stand for something, something other than American power; and it should have been possible during those hectic days of July and August, when the very shape of the world was changing before our eyes and miracles were being accomplished daily in the United Nations to tighten the bonds between nations, to introduce a sense of social direction into this war. But no social directives were given,

and the peasants of Korea could say with honest conviction: "It is true we have been invaded, and we must fight back. What then?"

The answer might be guerrilla war for twenty years, or it might be peace; but there would be no hope of peace unless there was a fair distribution of the land to the Korean peasant, unless he had the sense that the land belonged to him at last, and he had something to fight for. The Chinese invasion of Korea did not essentially alter the problem. It meant that Korea was falling under the shadow of Chinese rather than Russian Communism: it meant also that Chinese Communism was pursuing an imperialist adventure which followed in its main outlines the comparable adventures of the Soviet Union. In these adventures the plight of the Korean peasants was being forgotten, but in the end it was precisely the will of these peasants which would prevail. Eventually, when the armies were withdrawn, they would take over the exhausted country, thankful to none of the armies which had over-run the country of the morning calm.

## IV

### INDIA: The Naked and the Dead

Peace earth, peace air, peace heavens, peace waters, peace herbs, peace trees, peace may the All-gods be to me: peace, peace, through all this peace. With all this peace may we bring to peace whatever here is terrible, is cruel, is sinful. May all that be to us tranquil, benevolent, peaceful. —KRISHNA YAJURVEDA

ON AN August day in 1948, the prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, who once called himself “half a Communist,” accepted from the hands of the Brahmin priests the sacred emblems of power: a chalice, a crimson robe, and some water from the sacred springs of the Ganges. His face was smeared with the appropriate unguents, and as he stepped out onto the balcony to be seen by the people, who received from him the spiritual blessing known as *darshan*, which may be translated as “the virtue flowing out of some sacred or royal person,” a tremendous confused roar rose from the multitude.

To many Indians there was nothing in the least strange in the behavior of either Nehru or the crowd. Visitors to Gandhi constantly threw themselves at full length in the dust and clutched and kissed his feet. Not only mahatmas were treated in this way: even minor religious teachers were offered the respect paid to the maharajas. Reverence is as native to India as its poverty, its vultures, and its scarred burned hills. And perhaps it was characteristic of India, too, that in Hyderabad, during those early days of rejoicing, when India was no longer the jewel of the empire but a dominion possessing sovereignty in its own right, that for the first time armed men who called themselves Communists were forming their first “frontier

regions." Already a secret war was being waged. It was a war between Nehru and the men who had come to power with him against a small handful of desperate and unyielding men. Inevitably it would have to be fought to a finish. Two currents were opposed. It was not that Nehru represented the continuation of the liberal elements in British rule, a Brahmin descended from the prime minister at the court of the last of the Mogul emperors, a man who spoke in the cultivated accents of an educated Englishman: it was simply that he had no roots in the peasantry and could only with the greatest difficulty come to understand them, and in the years following the war they represented the potential power of India. Nehru himself was perfectly conscious of his lack of understanding of them. He wrote once:

Looking at them in their misery and overflowing gratitude, I was filled with shame and sorrow, shame at my own easy-going and comfortable life and our petty politics of the city, which ignored this vast multitude of semi-naked sons and daughters of India, sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of India. A new picture of India seemed to rise before me, naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable. And their faith in us, casual visitors from a distant city, embarrassed me and filled me with a new responsibility that frightened me.<sup>1</sup>

The experience made Nehru a disciple of the peasant, but he was moved by an intellectual compassion: there was always the half-smile, the astonished glimpse at himself, the wonder that he should find himself in such strange company. On another occasion he wrote: "In my own country sometimes I have an exile's feeling." He was never more an exile than when he was among the peasants.

That he should have come to power when he did can never be described as an accident of history. He was groomed for the part. Gandhi, choosing among all the natural leaders thrown up by the Indian revolution, knew no one wiser, more popular, more capable of fitting the rôle he had himself played for forty years. Nehru possessed gifts rare in India; even his rages and his subtlety worked in his favor. He saw Asia as one, and that was rare among politicians anywhere. He wrote a number of excellent books in a style which showed that he possessed at times a brilliant command

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Toward Freedom* (New York, John Day, 1941), p. 346.

of English rhythms. He was proud and querulous, afraid of power and at the same time delighting in power, and he possessed a peculiar, quiet affection for Buddhism, and kept on his table in Bombay a photograph of the famous statue of the Buddha discovered in Anuradhapura, whose features closely resembled his own. His greatest gifts were his intelligence and his sense of the drama of political life; and when these worked together, he was a formidable foe. They did not always work together. Sometimes the furious compassionate rages to which he is addicted blind his intelligence, as they blind his dramatic sense, but more than once it has happened that rage has provided the motive force by which he has reached the highest political art. Such an occasion occurred at the beginning of the fifty-sixth annual meeting of the Congress party, held in late September, 1950.

For some months previously, Nehru's power within Congress had been declining. It had even become doubtful whether he could remain prime minister. The extremists within Congress were massing their forces, demanding retaliatory action against the Moslem minority because of the alleged mistreatment of 12,000,000 Hindus in Pakistan. Tempers were at fever pitch. Nehru as prime minister had refused to launch a punitive expedition against Kashmir. Altogether 12,000,000 people had been uprooted from their homes, and perhaps 1,000,000 had been massacred; after the partition extremists on both sides of the frontier were proclaiming the necessity and inevitability of war. The threat was only too evident. It was a threat that could be carried out without warning and with considerable ease. Other factors were involved. The election for the presidency of Congress, held on August 29, had resulted in the failure of the candidate Nehru put forward. Shankarrao Deo, the former secretary-general of the party, was third in the list. The successful candidate was Purshottam Tandon, an old bearded orthodox Hindu who believed in vegetarianism and Ayur-Veda medicine, and set himself firmly against Westernization, and in general possessed the same philosophical ideas as the Rashtraya Swayamsevak Sangh, the extreme Hindu nationalist movement, among whose recruits were the murderers of Gandhi. There was no evidence that Tandon believed in terrorism; there was, however, considerable evidence that he believed in a war against Kashmir. He had been elected because

he publicly demanded that the Moslems be punished, and also because, while Congress was growing increasingly ashamed of the corruption within its ranks, the austere sixty-eight-year-old former speaker of the Uttar Pradesh state legislature was known to be incorruptible. At the meeting of Congress, Nehru was bitterly attacked, and when the subject of Kashmir came up, he made a reply which first outraged and then pleased the members so greatly that they gave him an acclamation. Before the meeting Nehru had told his friends that he expected to be expelled from the party or acclaimed. Speaking in a high-pitched angry voice, he declared:

Whatever disputes or conflicts may exist now or may arise in the future between India and Pakistan, they should be considered as political problems. They must only be dealt with as political problems. Never should communalism or the misuse of religion be allowed to mar or distort consideration of our internal problems. We dare not forsake our own policy for one of retaliation. We must treat our minorities with full justice and fairness, and they should be allowed to feel that they are treated with justice and fairness.

There may be some people who desire retaliation of this kind. Then let me ask them how such an attitude can be maintained in the name of democracy? If that is called democracy, then I say to hell with such democracy. Democratic principles are not a matter of convenience to be treated according to people's whims. . . .

I am ashamed of the way the question has been brought up by Congressmen. I refuse to bow to the wishes of the mob. You cannot waver. If you want me to lead Congress, you must follow my lead unequivocally. If you do not want me to remain prime minister, you must tell me, and then I shall go. I will not hesitate. I will go out and fight independently for the ideals of the Congress as I have done all these years.

When Nehru had finished speaking, he discovered to his surprise that there was no opposition. Patel, the deputy prime minister and leader of the right wing of Congress, was silent. It was left to Purshottam Tandon to make a cautious reply, agreeing with everything Nehru had said. Outside the enormous tent in which the meeting was held, and from where the speeches were broadcast, 300,000 Indians raised the cry "*Jawaharlal Ki Jai*" (Long live Nehru!)

To have given such a speech on such an occasion demanded almost incredible courage; it also demanded a close estimate of the danger



involved. Nehru had foreseen that once he was removed from the post of prime minister two consequences of incalculable harm would arise: war would be declared against Pakistan, and in the rear of the Indian armies the Communists would rise. To those who knew India well, those September days were breath-taking, for, unknown to the West, all along the Western Coast of India the Communists were preparing uprisings.

The danger of Communist uprisings was temporarily averted. So, too, was the danger of war against Pakistan. Nehru's attitude toward the Hindu extremists<sup>2</sup> was one of contempt. The nature of this contempt Nehru demonstrated when, after the bomb throwing shortly before Gandhi's death, he walked out into the crowded streets and faced the demonstrators with the words, "Why don't you kill me as well?" His contempt for the Communists was hardly less. He wrote in *The Discovery of India*:

In India the Communist Party is completely divorced from, and is ignorant of, the national traditions that fill the minds of the people. It believes that communism necessarily implies a contempt for the past. So far as it is concerned, the history of the world began in November 1917 and everything that precedes this was preparatory and leading up to it. Normally speaking, in a country like India, with large numbers of people on the verge of starvation and the economic structure cracking up, communism should have a wide appeal. In a sense there is that vague appeal, but the Communist party cannot take advantage of it because it has cut itself off from the springs of national sentiment and speaks in a language which finds no echo in the hearts of the people. It remains an energetic but small group with no real roots.<sup>3</sup>

The statement was made in 1945. Five years later he was still of the same opinion. Passing through Rangoon after a tour of Java, he thought to give comfort to those who had suffered from large Com-

<sup>2</sup> The Hindu extremists were nicely balanced by the extremists in Pakistan led by Moulana Abul Ala Moudoodi, a seventy-year-old dignitary who recently founded the Jamaat e Islami, or Theocratic Islamic party. The party would outlaw non-Moslems and give them no place in the government. The prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, is regarded by them as "undesirable, because he is far from possessing Islamic virtues." There is a Hindu minister in the Pakistan cabinet and high posts are still being held by Englishmen.

<sup>3</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New York, John Day, 1946), p. 528. Copyright, 1946, by The John Day Company.

munist uprisings, and in almost identical words he repeated his former verdict. He said:

Communism cannot envelop Asia because it will always fail to overthrow the people's strong urge towards nationalism. Communism defeats itself whenever it comes to blows with nationalism, because it goes against the general sentiments of the people. They should remember that their terrorist tactics only make them weaker and help to bring about the disintegration of the party.<sup>4</sup>

Nehru's verdict on recent Communist history was not, however, an altogether accurate one. Communism *had* enveloped China; and it was observed that the Chinese peasants listened to the promises of agrarian reform made by the Communists more often than they listened to Chiang Kai-shek's pleas for national unity. But if Nehru was wrong when he spoke of nationalism, there is enough evidence to show that he was right when he spoke about terrorism. Almost inevitably in Asiatic countries terrorism, unless it is the result of an overwhelming force, leads to the decline of the party wielding it. Where Nehru was dangerously wrong was in underestimating the power of the Communists, for in some of its aspects the Communist party was answering the demands of the peasants more effectively than Congress. While Nehru was speaking in Rangoon, there still existed in eastern Hyderabad a small Communist "border region" which had been in existence since 1946.

The Indian Communist party was founded in 1924 by Manendra Nath Roy, who had joined the revolutionary movement as early as 1903. For years he remained a syndicalist, taking part in a whole series of political murders between 1906 and 1914. Visiting Moscow in 1919, he met Lenin, who was impressed by the revolutionary exuberance of the short, dark, thin man with the enormous brooding eyes. Lenin appointed him head of the Eastern Bureau of the Comintern, of which Roy was the only Asiatic founding member. In this position he claims to have been completely in Lenin's confidence, and during one period he was inexplicably sent to Mexico to found a Mexican Communist party. The confidence which Lenin reposed in him was followed by an extraordinary close relationship to Stalin, which lasted until 1929, although Roy himself, as the result of a

<sup>4</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, June 27, 1950.

mission to Hankow in 1927, probably precipitated the downfall of the Chinese Communist party after the April massacre in Shanghai. In 1929 he was convicted with thirty-four Indians and three Englishmen of conspiracy in Meerut, the charge against him being that he had "conspired to deprive the King-Emperor of his authority in India." Among those who were also convicted was Puran Chand Joshi, a young law student, who became secretary of the party in 1937. Roy's influence within the party declined, and by 1940 he was setting himself up in opposition to the Communist party. He founded the Radical Democratic party, whose aim was a pure form of socialism modeled on the programs of the Fabian Society; and though for a while he claimed to have 150,000 card-bearing members, the party lost support after backing the British war effort. By 1943 it was in full decline, and today Roy has withdrawn from politics altogether as he propagates a singularly unreal and ineffective form of humanism. Recently he compiled a brief account of his experiences in Hankow in 1927, and he explains at some length why it seemed to him that Mao Tse-tung was an impractical visionary.

The legacy left by Roy was an unhappy one. He had led the Communist party along the road of violence and conspiracy: his very closeness to Lenin and Stalin had given him an authoritarian temper. He had welded the Indian Communist party into a hard underground movement consisting of a few carefully selected and dedicated men, most of them students. He had no conception of agrarian revolution, and he played continually with the thought of overthrowing the British raj by the massacre of all British officials. By 1930 he was repudiated by the Kremlin, and he must have received the hardest blow he ever received when Molotov announced in that year, "It is essential to form a Communist party in India, for none has ever existed." There were a considerable number of documents in the Kremlin which suggested that Roy had not only brought one into existence and also that nearly all of Lenin's knowledge of the East had come to him from the faithful Roy.

At the time when the Comintern was still in its infancy and still uncertain of the growing power of the Chinese Communists, Zinoviev was paying particular attention to India. "The Achilles heel of the British Empire is India," he said in 1924, "and we must therefore make every effort to develop all possible lines of advance there."

So vast a heel demanded a corresponding effort, but it was not until 1946 that the effort was made, and by that time the British had departed.

Among those who joined the Communist party after Roy's defection was a young American-trained lawyer called Jai Prakash Narayan. Tall, square-jawed, with a robust sense of humor and an extraordinary passion for danger, he remained only briefly a Communist, and joined the Socialist party at its inception in 1934. He soon became its acknowledged leader. The party worked within the organization of Congress but maintained its own program, which included the nationalization of the land. "No one should hold more than twenty acres," Jai Prakash Narayan said. "It is enough for any man." The Socialist program however was constantly shifting. They did not employ terrorism as a weapon, though in 1942 it was the Socialist wing of Congress which brought about for a brief period the state of "necessary anarchy" which Gandhi had long desired. Their chief weapons were the strike and the *hartal*, which can be defined as a strike accompanied by more or less violent demonstrations. The inevitable result was that many Indians believed them to be in the Communist camp, and many Communists infiltrated among them. Yusuf Meherally, one of the noblest and most dedicated of the young Socialist leaders, has written at length of the duplicity of the Communists who entered the Socialist party, promised to obey the Socialist leaders, and then sabotaged Socialist activity. A continual danger confronted the Socialist leaders: the danger of being overrun on all fronts by the Communists. "We are always under Communist pressure," said Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali late in 1947. "We even admire them very often. There are so many levels where they work with complete disregard for their own lives. We must respect them, even when we disagree with them. When they are right—and often they are right—how shall we deal with them?"<sup>5</sup> The words were spoken shortly before the Socialist party resigned from Congress, but they did little to clear the confusions which existed among the Socialist leadership. Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali had been one of the outstanding leaders during 1942. She had walked over India with a price on her head, unrecognized because she wore the costume of a poor peasant woman and because she entered cities where

<sup>5</sup> In conversation with the author.

the British hardly expected to find a fugitive. She possessed, and still possesses, a wonderfully clear brain, but she found it increasingly difficult to discover the exact place which a Socialist party could fill, situated as it was between Congress and the Communists. On one subject, however, she was completely definite: the Socialists could not force their way to power by violence. These tactics could be left to the Communists.

Puran Chand Joshi, however, had no illusions about violence. The Communist party under his leadership had behaved with extraordinary quietness and legality during the war. When the war ended, he prepared to employ violence as spectacularly as possible. The naval mutiny in 1946 was engineered by the Communists; so too were the textile strikes at Amalner and Coimbatore, and so were the peasant agitations among the Worli tribes at Dahanu. The more serious uprisings in the Telingana district of Hyderabad and the neighboring district of Andhra were not engineered by the Communists, but Communists infiltrated into the movement after the uprising had occurred.

The uprisings in Hyderabad and Madras were to have a profound effect on the development of Communist policy in India. What began as a peasant insurrection against the *zemindars* (landlords) became in time the first Communist "border region" in India. Today there are still armed Communists in these regions, and there are at least seven other "border regions" in various parts of India. There were particular reasons why the outbreak should have occurred in Hyderabad. The government was corrupt and feudal, consisting of Moslems ruling over a predominantly Hindu state. The landlords ruled. They had power of life and death over the peasants. They held vast estates, which the peasants worked for about a third of the crop; in this the landlords were no different to landlords elsewhere in India. All over India they demand half or a third of the crop; the share could be increased to 80 per cent at harvest time by the encouragement of a few carefully calculated "adjustments." In Hyderabad, as elsewhere, the peasants paid the taxes, repaired the wells, furnished their own seeds and farm tools, and found themselves in perpetual debt to the *banyas*, or moneylenders, who charged interest rates of 38 per cent a month, and even in states where progressive legislation had been acted they could charge as high as 18 per cent. The

peasants possessed no title to the land: they could be dismissed at the pleasure of the zemindars, who possessed their own armed police force, made their own laws, and punished violators by throwing them in their own prisons.<sup>6</sup> The Second World War brought unrest to the peasants of Central India. Floods, the famine in Bengal in 1943, the immense strains to which the Indian administrations were put, the knowledge that independence was at hand, all these had affected the Hyderabad Government, which, though it issued its own coinage and flew its own flag, saw itself undermined by the rising power of the peasantry. It was a feudal kingdom, and it acted as feudal kingdoms always do: with one hand it repressed the peasants with quite extraordinary violence, and with the other it made minor concessions. One of these concessions was a law which allowed the peasants the right to claim ownership of the land if it had been worked continuously for three years. It was not an efficient law, nor was it intended to be, for the zemindar could always arrange that at the expiration of two years and eleven months the peasant could be dismissed from his land. Moreover, the peasants, by being permanently indebted to the zemindars would still have to pay the greater part of their profits even if they retained the land. Oppression was to breed oppression, and when the peasants rebelled against the zemindars with spears, pitchforks, and knives, the zemindars organized an even more violent police force to control them. Under the command of the fanatic Moslem leader, Kazim Razvi, they robbed, pillaged, and murdered at will. They had jeeps and portable radios; they were also provided with the benevolent and disinterested assistance of His Exalted Highness the Nizam, who threw open the Hyderabad state armories to these roving bands who called themselves, after the name of their leader, the Rakazars. It was an unwise move. For nine months the Rakazars burned through the land, but when the Indian National Army was ordered into Hyderabad their days were over. Thereupon there followed a peculiar and perhaps inevitable strategem: the Rakazars handed their arms over to the Communists. An exactly similar union be-

<sup>6</sup> In the late August of 1946, I counted six black police vans on the road between Aurungabad and Ajanta. They were full of prisoners, and it was explained to me that they were all "Communists." The Communists, however, made no appearance in Hyderabad until a year later.

tween the Communists and the extremist Moslems had occurred in Malaya and West Java, and the significance of the move was not lost among the small scattered groups of Communists in Pakistan.

Having armed the Communists, the Rakazars could look forward to a triumph, even though they were themselves arrested and tried as bandits. Since their main enemy was the rising tide of Hinduism, they consoled themselves with the knowledge that they had made Congress, and the Socialist party which seceded from Congress in 1947, powerless over large areas of western Hyderabad. The Communists badly needed a rallying point. They had been expelled from Congress at the end of the war, largely on the grounds that they had cooperated with the British. If they could hold on for any length of time along the border regions between Hyderabad and Madras, they could at least make themselves sufficiently independent to create a settled economy of their own protected by an iron guard of guerrillas; then, by ceaseless propaganda among the peasant *kisans* (unions), they could urge insurrection elsewhere. What is surprising is that they did not succeed as well as they might have done. Their tactics were carefully arranged. Areas were divided into secret cells, with one peasant leader in charge of the cell, with a fleet of messengers at his service to maintain communication with neighboring villages. The Communists did not force their attentions upon the villagers. They waited upon events, distributed propaganda, and made themselves indispensable in a variety of ways.<sup>7</sup> They lent their resources to splinter groups, arrested and sometimes murdered the more refractory zemindars, and spoke quietly of the inevitable establishment of the Soviet Republic of India. Though Joshi was still general-secretary of the Indian Communist party, power was quickly passing into the hands of B. T. Ranadive, who, like the Communist leader in Malaya, S. A. Ganapathy, came from South India and had a vested interest in making South India Communist before the rest. Documents which were captured showed how very effectively the Communists had dug their roots in the Telingana area. They maintained contact with smaller Communist areas in Tamilnad and in Bengal. The movement seemed to be

<sup>7</sup> An excellent account of Communist administration in Tamilnad is given in the last chapters of John Frederick Muehl's *Interview with India* (New York, John Day, 1950).

following the pattern outlined by the Chinese Communists in 1927. Then Mao Tse-tung had called for a general uprising among the poor peasants, only to retire baffled when the Central Committee urged moderation, largely as the result of a telegram from Stalin addressed to Manendra Nath Roy. The telegram stated that the uprising must be carried on cautiously because there were officers in the revolutionary Kuomintang army who possessed land and would be discommoded by peasant uprisings. The Chinese Communists, as a result of the telegram and its disclosure to Chiang Kai-shek, had thereupon taken to the mountains. In Central India there was the same misunderstanding of the powerful forces at work in Communist circles outside the country; and the young leaders, who were mostly young students, were surprised to discover that Moscow neither agreed with their methods nor accepted their principles, and this in spite of the fact that Zhdanov had called for a policy of violence and uncompromising hostility against the government in power. Later it was possible to discern the nature of the crime they were committing in Telangana: they were following Mao Tse-tung rather than Stalin.

A strange air of bewilderment and confusion hung over the Communist areas in Central India throughout 1948. Not until September did the Indian National Army capture the capital of Hyderabad, but even before September the Rakazars were arming the Communists, and at the same time they were making attacks on the Communists. The administration within the state was weakening. It was almost impossible to enforce law in the border regions, and the frontier guards and customs officials were no longer in a position to make their influence felt. Congress and the Socialist party had not been outlawed in Hyderabad, but they too were without influence. To make matters even less encouraging for Congress, nearly all Congress members were privately warned that they would be massacred the moment the Indian National Army penetrated across the borders. In theory Ranadive's position could hardly have been better. In fact, however, it was gradually worsening, for his own dictatorial attitude caused resentment among his followers, and the split between the two wings of the party, the one determined to follow Stalin and the other determined to follow Mao Tse-tung, grew wider. Ranadive himself, patiently writing pamphlets which



consisted of heterogeneous selections from the works of the two great Communist leaders, as though unsure which course to follow, protected by his own cloudy rhetoric, never made up his mind to whom he owed the greater allegiance. His chief source of power arose from the fact that he was in a position to expel anyone who disagreed with him.

In February, 1948, the Indian Communist party held a conference in Calcutta. At the same time, and in the same place, there was held a "Southeast Asia Youth Conference." These conferences were to have remarkable results, for in the first, Puran Chand Joshi was overthrown, and in the second, blueprints were drawn up for uprisings all over Southeast Asia. These blueprints seem to have been devised according to a carefully worked out timetable. In March the Communists rose in Burma, opposing a government which had only recently come to power; in June they began to operate in the forests of Malaya; and in August they attempted to bring down by force the Republican Government of Indonesia, which was itself still fighting against the Dutch. The conference did not extend its influence beyond the four areas of India, Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia. This was a significant limitation, for it suggested an attempt to weld a federated Communist party together on semi-national lines, with Asia divided among three Communist blocks: Russian, Chinese, and one predominantly Indian. The Indochinese were not invited, nor, for quite separate reasons, were the Koreans or the Siamese. When, on February 27, 1948, Joshi left the party which he had led since 1936, the split was not healed; and when the new general-secretary issued an unqualified indictment of the Nehru administration, employing all the stock phrases of the pro-Soviet propagandists, saying, for example, that the government in power was "based wholly on cooperation with the Anglo-American imperialists," little had been gained, for though Ranadive had spoken so uncompromisingly as to suggest an open declaration of war, he had in fact repeated what everyone already knew: the Indian Communists would use all available means to terrorize the country into accepting their domination. But it was noticeable that their indictment read strangely as though it had been written in Moscow. The influence of Mao Tse-tung could no longer be detected. The old, weary phrases like "the Democratic Front" which "must become the genuine

fighting alliance of the masses against imperialism, feudalism, and the bourgeoisie" were revived, and the party was to disavow completely the "reformist tendencies" of Joshi, becoming a league of poor peasants, students, petty bourgeoisie, and progressive intellectuals under the leadership of the Communist party. Partly, of course, the directives from the Second Congress of the Indian Communist party were a bid for popular support; the issues were to be simplified; and Joshi, defending himself and criticizing his own mistakes, while begging to be allowed to retain the leadership of the party, also fulfilled an essential function, which is more clearly understood by the Russian Communists than by the Chinese: he was offering himself as a scapegoat. For the next two years he was to beg to be allowed to return within the bosom of the party, but in June, 1950, despairing of any agreement with Ranadive, Joshi formed his own Communist party under the name of the All-India party. The All-India party claimed to be "a Marxist-Leninist party following the guidance of the Cominform." It protested against the political theses of the Indian Communist party and accused it of "an ultraleftist policy." It also claimed that Ranadive was following a policy of "middle-class revolutionary adventurism," disregarding the realities of the situation.

Though the All-India party came into existence only in the summer of 1950, the separation had taken place during the week-long Congress held in February and early March, 1948. The name of the new party was deliberately intended to confuse the issues. For many years the Indian Communist party had worked through and dominated the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), founded in 1920. The words "All-India" had even begun to acquire Communist associations. The title, however, was misleading. J. P. Kripalani's enormous government-sponsored Indian National Trade Union Congress, founded as recently as May, 1946, was far stronger, and the Indian Labor Congress directed by the Socialists was at least twice as strong as the Communist organization. But the AITUC was powerful in the south, it had been well led, and it was aided by the All-India Students Federation and the Kisan Sabha, the peasant union which the Communists were increasingly controlling. With Joshi's defection from the party, there arose a struggle for the leadership of the various unions and federations under Communist in-

fluence. In the history of the Communist parties of the Far East, Joshi's defection had a superficial resemblance to the defection of Chen Tu-hsiu in Hankow in 1927, but there were important differences. Chen Tu-hsiu had weakly submitted to his fate. Joshi had no intention of submitting to his fate.

The Indian Communists during the years 1948-1950 suffered under severe strains. Even more important than the split were the actions taken by the government. Patel had been quietly waiting for the moment to strike. Communist party members had increased from 7,000 in 1942 to more than 70,000 in 1948, and though their numbers represented an absurdly small proportion of the 350,000,000 inhabitants of India, Patel had no illusions about their strength. He struck hard. Throughout 1948, while the peasant kisans and the Communists who were directing them held out in Telingana and Andhra, and a new "border region" was slowly coming to birth in Madura in the south, he gave orders for the arrest and imprisonment without trial of all known Communist members. Within a year 3,000 had been rounded up. The party was outlawed in West Bengal and in Madras, where the disturbances had been greatest; a whole series of Communist-inspired strikes had occurred in West Bengal, and in Madras the Communist party was acquiring an amazing strength, for there too there had been feudal landlords and heavy impositions on the peasants.

Though there was a split which threatened even in 1948 to break the back of the Indian Communist movement, and for the first time the government was acting with strength against them, the Communists could still count their advantages. Their roots were strongest in Bengal, Hyderabad, Andhra and Tamilnad, but they possessed thriving cells in Malabar, Bombay, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh (formerly known as U.P., or United Provinces) and Bihar. They had a following among the Naga tribesmen in Assam.<sup>8</sup> They were able to keep large parts of Calcutta in a perpetual state of turmoil by bomb throwing and rioting. They were beginning to sabotage the railroads by removing fish plates, a technique previously adopted with considerable success in 1942 by Congress members. It had needed a division of six battalions in addition to police forces to put down the guerrillas in Hyderabad, and there were still bands of guerrillas

<sup>8</sup> *Far Eastern Survey*, July 12, 1950.

long after the expedition had left. Violence of the most virulent kind had been ordered, and inevitably it could lead only to violent suppression. Patel had observed that Communist parties have a fatal tendency to split and are weakest at the moment of fission. He had struck at the right time, but it was debatable whether he really understood that in some areas the uprisings were justified.

When John Frederick Muehl arrived at Tanjore on the outskirts of the Communist-held territory, he met the local cell leader of the *kisans* in a small village. Except for two years spent in the mills at Madura, the cell leader had been born in the village and expected to die there. His father had once attempted to organize the peasants. For this he had been beaten to death by the hired *goondas*, or thugs, of the local *zemindar*. The old man explained that things were not so bad in recent times, for about twenty years before, the villagers had begun to organize themselves, but occasionally there would be a repetition of the age-old practice of treating the peasants as serfs. He spoke of a nearby village which had been evacuated and burned to the ground by order of the *zemindars* because the villagers were neglecting their fields. "You see," he explained, "the *zemindars* own the villages and houses as well as the fields themselves. It amounts to owning the villagers too, since to be driven off the land is like a sentence of death." Mr. Muehl went on to ask them how they had acquired their holdings. "For a hundred generations their people have been landlords," the old man answered, "and for a hundred generations my people have labored for them."<sup>9</sup>

The patterns of Indian land tenure called for agrarian reform; Nehru's government had done nothing to give the peasants ownership of the land they worked, nor had it attempted to reduce the rents. The *kisans* in Madura had forced the *zemindars* to accept only a quarter of the crop. They dared not refuse, for the *kisans* possessed armed force with which to back their demands, but the old, slow corruptions remained: in a hundred ways the *zemindars* could oppose the agrarian revolution. Meanwhile, Tamil Communists were consolidating larger areas. They had become a well disciplined force, with armed sentries stationed at strategic points. The collectivist principles of the Communists could be easily adapted on the vast *zemindari* estates.

<sup>9</sup> Muehl, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

The same pattern had been visible in Andhra, though the 20,000 peasants who claimed to be Communist party members in 1946-1947 had been whittled down to about 1,000 by the late spring of 1950.<sup>10</sup> Yet they were by no means incapable of exerting their power, and a stream of articles against them appeared in the party's organ, *The Communist*. If their gravest failing in the eyes of Ranadive was that they were not immediately obedient to his orders, there were also certain doctrinal failings. The poor peasantry were not allowed to possess an overruling voice in the village soviets; they were vacillating with regard to the middle peasants; they even allowed themselves to be influenced by rich peasant ideology. The charge presumably meant that they did not murder the rich landlords and continued to allow rent to be paid to them. In an article called "Struggle for People's Democracy and Socialism—Some Questions of Strategy and Tactics," which appeared in *The Communist* during June and July, 1949, the central leadership said: "The Communist Party of India has accepted Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as the authoritative sources of Marxism. It has not discovered new sources of Marxism beyond these." The inference was clear. Orders were still trickling through from Moscow. Mao Tse-tung was not yet to be regarded as a theoretician equal to the sacred four.

It is doubtful whether the Communists in Andhra cared very much for the directives of the central committee. They made formal recantations in some cases, but continued to apply the technique of Mao Tse-tung in their own soviet areas. The statement of the central committee had even included a direct attack on Mao: his theories were declared to be such that no Communist party would accept them, a statement surprising enough, since Mao's troops had already crossed the Yangtze and he already represented a vast potential Communist power. The peasants could afford to disregard the central committee, for the same reason that Mao Tse-tung could afford to disregard the central committee in 1927: they were armed and they had their roots in the peasantry. When they failed, it was not because of their disavowal of the political theses of the central

<sup>10</sup> *Far Eastern Survey*, July 12, 1950, from which I have also taken the quotation from *The Communist*. These appear in an article called "Dissension Among India's Communists," by Jean A. Curran, Jr., which was by far the most penetrating analysis of the Indian Communist party available.

committee: they failed because their excesses brought about police retaliation, with the result that the peasants were left within a kind of neutral zone, protected by no force arising within themselves, hated by the landlords, who were nevertheless wary of a recrudescence of terrorism. There were some districts where the revolution resembled in its effects one of these explosives which, when buried deep in the ground and detonated, simply explode upward, causing a minimum effect on near-by buildings, and all that can be discerned afterward of the huge packed charge of explosives is a small hole in the ground. In these districts a kind of apathy had descended on the peasants.

The extent of that apathy is well illustrated by a remarkable account of a visit to the Andhra area made in the early months of 1950 by Mr. Darrell Berrigan. After an engineer had explained that the central committee of the Indian Communist party had simply issued a whole series of pontifical orders and continually urged discipline, without having the least idea of what kind of discipline was involved or what kind of situation confronted the peasants, an old, powerfully framed peasant leader jumped up and exclaimed:

"The revolutionary upsurge is going down! Through the demoralization which resulted from the police oppression that followed the party's terrorist line, we former communists now find ourselves defending the villages against our own comrades! We have to. If anyone in the village is killed, then the police will kill us. They don't trust us. So we defend the villages while the rich landlords sleep in the palace." He stood up and strode across the roof, his sandals flapping fiercely with every step. "Nobody is going to shout slogans now! Nobody is going to demand higher wages! If we did go into the villages to ask the laborers to demand higher wages, they would say, 'Please, baba, please go away and leave us in peace.'" <sup>11</sup>

Demoralization could hardly be more complete, but there were undertones in the peasant leaders' report of the situation which demanded careful analysis. The air of hurt indignation, the sense of an excessive failure, the curious belief that the police should protect Communists who are avowed terrorists, all these suggested that

<sup>11</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept. 16, 1950. Article entitled "Will Creeping Communism Engulf India?"

without too great difficulty the peasant leader would one day find himself again in the Communist camp. Congress, however, had acted unwisely. It was not that they had ordered soldiers from other provinces to occupy Telingana and Andhra during the disturbances, though this in the eyes of the peasants was a serious crime: it was simply that Congress had provided no alternative. *There were whole districts in India where the peasants could find no one who would listen to their complaints.* Hounded by the police, who arrested indiscriminately anyone they thought to be Communist, their land occupied by soldiers who did not speak Telegu, their only friends among the Communists, whom they could no longer trust, the peasants in these areas were at the mercy of despotic forces they could not control. The police were corrupt; the soldiers raped their women, stole and murdered at random; anyone who opposed the soldiers, the police, or the landlords could be arrested as a "Communist sympathizer," and for the first time in the history of these peasants they noticed that the landlords were often considerably less demanding than the police or the soldiers, if only because they wanted their land to produce for them. It was the same in the Communist areas of Assam. Whole villages were made to pay for the crimes of individuals: the inhabitants would have to go through the ordeal of whipping, or they were made to pay heavy fines. Meanwhile the Communists deliberately destroyed paddy stocks, in the hope, perhaps, that the "cutting edge" of the peasants would be made keener.

Who was responsible?

It would seem to be perfectly clear that Congress was responsible, because it had failed to institute adequate agrarian reforms; the landlords were responsible, because they had continued their ancient feudal practices and maintained ancient feudal rights long after these had become outworn relics of a form of civilization that had passed forever; the Communists were responsible by their policy of terrorism; the police were responsible by their savagery in repressing terrorism; and finally the Indian Socialist party was responsible, because it had failed to find the "middle way." Least of all were the peasants responsible. "We are being ground in a grindstone," a peasant told Darrell Berrigan. It was hardly that. They were being crushed by rocks falling from every quarter. In effect, it was as

though Congress, the army, the police, the Communists, and the landlords were in a conspiracy against the peasants.

There were still other forces working against the peasants. In Madras, especially, the caste system remained: all of Gandhi's incessant preaching had failed to move the Brahmins of the south from their position of religious authority. Worse even than the religious, military, feudal, and political oppressions were the floods and droughts, which came with a peculiar severity during these years.

Within the Indian Communist party the tensions had increased to a point where clear-cut solutions became inevitable: the split threatened to disrupt the party completely. Through the summer of 1950 various means were employed to ward off the final separation, for the "All-India party" threatened to have an even wider following than Ranadive's party, and Ranadive himself, exulting in his close connections with Moscow, in rather the same way that Manendra Nath Roy exulted in his connections with Moscow in the early days, when he was a close friend of Lenin and the founder of the party, was the most dangerously disrupting influence.

The complex situation arising within the Indian Communist parties is worth studying, for exactly the same processes are probably at work in the Communist parties of southeast Asia. The first warning of the blow came in January, with the publication in the official Cominform organ, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, of an article by Mao Tse-tung. The fact that Mao Tse-tung's article was published in Bucharest could only mean that it had the entire approval of the Cominform and the theoreticians in the Kremlin. Called "The Mighty Advance in the National Liberation Movement in the Colonies and Dependent Countries," the argument consisted of a restatement of the Chinese Communist position, pointing out the methods by which the Chinese Communists had come to power. The methods, as everyone knew, were comparatively simple, and in the last analysis they were precisely two. First, the Communists had organized a coalition with parties and persons who were against the established order; thereupon "equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, master of the art of revolutionary strategy and tactics, breathing the spirit of revolutionary irreconcilability to the enemies of the people," they found themselves in a position



to dominate the coalition. Second, they had formed, "when the necessary internal conditions allowed for it," a People's Liberation Army under the leadership of Communists.

In a statement of the editorial board of *The Communist* issued in February and March, 1950, Mao Tse-tung's words were taken to heart. He had simply reiterated something which could have been said by anyone who had read Edgar Snow's *Red Star Over China* published thirteen years before. It was not among the more plausible and well considered articles which Mao Tse-tung has written, but the fact that it was published *in extenso* in the official Cominform organ made it inevitable that the Indian Communist party would have to change its grand strategy. Ranadive had been mystifying everyone with his denunciations of Mao Tse-tung, believing that he was simply following the party line. Now he could no longer afford to do so. The long statement by the editorial board admitted past errors. The Indian Communists were among the weakest in Asia, and their weakness had accounted for tragic misconceptions of the rôle to be played by the Communists. The Indian Communist strategy would have to be examined in the light of Mao Tse-tung's achievements. In particular they should form a united "anti-imperialist" front (this would please Moscow), and they should raise armies (this would show that they had taken the lessons of the Chinese Communists to heart). Following Mao Tse-tung, they should make no attempt to frighten away liberal intellectuals or rich peasants, nor should they call for an immediate nationalization of the land. Their four important tasks were: (1) to expose Congress as the "running dog" of the imperialists, (2) organize joint strike committees in all unions, at the same time exposing the INTUC and the Socialist leaders, (3) to lead the revolutionary struggle of the peasants and agricultural workers, and (4) "to develop the broad-based struggle against the fascist repressive policy of the Congress rulers" in defense of civil liberties.<sup>12</sup>

Deprived of its mythological coating, the document envisaged a new emphasis on the agrarian revolt and the formation of disciplined Communist armies. Terrorism and violence were presumably revoked, though both remained in practice. The old practice of regarding all non-Communists as equally sinful was to be exchanged for a "united

<sup>12</sup> *Far Eastern Survey*, July 12, 1950.

front." The line would follow the Chinese method: guerrilla warfare, opportunistic alliances, attempts to isolate the government in power, and a determined propaganda campaign to prove that Nehru represented the same forces that Chiang Kai-shek represented. Whether there was any real difference between this program and the program Ranadive had adopted before is debatable: on doctrinal levels there was always an incessant splitting of hairs. What had happened was that Ranadive had outlived his usefulness, and his bouts of hysterical leader-writing suggested that he had lost his nerve. On July 19, 1950, he was ordered to resign his post, and at the same time the Communist Executive issued from its headquarters in Khetwadi Main Road, Bombay, a directive against "violence and sabotage." The Indian Government was unimpressed when Rajeshwar Rao assumed the place vacated by Ranadive. Inevitably, there would be the same disease under a different name. Patel, the deputy prime minister, simply observed: "We shall see that the government functions in such a way that no group or combination of groups can disrupt law and order in this country. If they persist in their methods they must take their chances."

Unfortunately there was no doubt that they *would* persist in their methods. Unfortunately, too, there was one party which would find itself occasionally within the toils of the Communists. Six weeks after Ranadive's expulsion, the test came. All through the summer Bombay had been simmering. On August 30, when 225,000 textile workers came out on strike for increased wages, the Socialists and the Communists found themselves working together. The strike, which lasted twenty-four hours and completely crippled the city, for nearly all the industrial and white-collar workers also came out, was led by the Communists, who burned the Indian national flag (because the wheel of Asoka was regarded as the badge of Congress), overturned street cars and automobiles, halted all traffic, and prepared to assume power. They failed, for the police attacked in force. At the end of the day, five strikers had been killed and some forty had been injured.

The danger lay here. If Nehru could swing his strength into line with the Socialists, there was a possibility that Communism could be defeated. If the Socialists swung their strength behind the Com-

munists, only the Communists would gain. Three years before, at the Socialist Congress at Kanpur, Jai Prakash Narayan had been perfectly aware of the danger. He said:

The Communists do not consider any party other than their own to be revolutionary or socialist: accordingly a policy of unity is to them only a means of infiltration into other parties in order to capture or destroy them. So there can never be any unity with the Communists.

The war years showed conclusively that the Communist parties all over the world are completely under the control of the Russian government. Under an ideological cloak of communism, they function everywhere as its permanent and loyal fifth column.

The Socialist party aims at the establishment of democratic socialism, whereas the objective of the Communist party is totalitarian Communism. There can be nothing in common between two parties working for such divergent ends.

But what if they used the same means?

In the past the Indian Communist party gave orders to the parties in South Asia and received orders from Moscow, sometimes indirectly through the British Communist party. Since the "February theses" the position had changed: the Indians would seek the advice of Peking, while attempting to hammer out the peculiar methods which were most suited to India. But the change of tactics, unless they could hold the Socialist party permanently in chains, offered few relevant solutions. It was unlikely that Nehru could be made to appear as monstrous as Chiang Kai-shek, nor was it likely that in the immediate future the Communists could establish revolutionary armies of any large size.

While the desperate game of the theses was being played, and the Socialists gradually lost their dynamic, the peasants suffered. In 1941 Indians had a life expectancy of twenty-seven years compared with the life expectancy of sixty-five in America; the figures have not notably changed since then. The poverty of the peasant made all other problems look small. He lived usually in a house of mud, without medical aid, without a spare set of clothes or a spare set of sandals, in perpetual debt. Only in Persia could such poverty be rivaled, for no other Asiatic peasant suffered so grimly. Theoretically

there was now equality between men and women, the power of the maharajas had been abolished,<sup>13</sup> and the overbearing demands of the zemindars had been curtailed; but in fact most of this was theory, and the deep-rooted changes long promised had not come about. There were two ministers in the government, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, minister for law, and Mr. Jagjivan Ram, minister for labor, who were untouchables, but the caste system had not been broken. Corruption was rampant within Congress. Violence and threats of violence were increasing. Against these there were some good signs. The Indians had acquired a new consciousness of their dignity; they had worked out a consistent foreign policy and were extending their contacts with the southeast; finally, the elections in Uttar Pradesh had shown in March, 1950, that the Indian peasants at their elections possessed a sound common sense and a wariness toward the Communists which they would probably demonstrate again in 1951, when elections were held throughout India. Yet there were all the dangers which come from the fact that Uttar Pradesh bordered on Tibet. They had suffered unbearable strains. Five million Hindus, mostly peasants, had fled during the time of partition, and were carrying on a precarious existence in lands where they had been unknown before. Nehru had promised India a welfare state, but the blueprint for the new state contained nothing to cheer the peasants: the half-promise that there would be a sufficiency of food by 1952 did not help peasants who had lacked a sufficiency throughout their lives. The autumn of 1950 saw earthquakes in Assam, floods in Punjab and Kashmir—the Vale of Kashmir, for which at one time the right wing had been prepared to bring about a general war, was fifteen feet under water—and from northern Bihar there came reports of a famine affecting 2,500,000 people. The Indian state had gone from triumph to triumph, but there was no noticeable difference in the lives of the peasants; and while they remained in squalor the Communists were in a position to employ them for their own ends.

Once, echoing Lincoln, Nehru had said: "India cannot exist half slave and half free." India was still half slave. The *banyas* were

<sup>13</sup> But there are unions of six states, like Rajasthan in the north, and of five states, like Mysore in the south, possessing internal autonomy under their own maharajas. The Rajpramukh, or president, of these unions is elected by a college of maharajas whose territory is within the unions.

still thriving, vast estates were still owned by landlords, the caste system remained over large areas of the country. Because India was half slave, the Communists had no need to employ violent methods: it would have been enough if the villagers wrote on their banners all over India, as they did in the Communist-held territories, "Vacate your chairs!" The slogan meant: "Go out of office, let us come in." It was a dangerous cry, and it would be heard more and more in India unless the peasants' demands were satisfied.

## V

# INDONESIA: The Code of the Kshatriyas

We have learned to handle instruments of power, but we neither worship nor swear allegiance to power. We have faith in a future of humanity in which life on humane principles will no longer be suppressed by power, in which there will be no wars and no reasons for hostility among human beings. . . . We fight by the code of the Kshatriyas.<sup>1</sup>

—SOETAN SJAHRIR

**I**N August, 1946, a year after the Republic of Indonesia had been proclaimed, a young lawyer whose gifts had already marked him out as among the greatest of the Asiatic revolutionary leaders broadcast to the people of Indonesia an appeal for humaneness. He reminded them that they belonged to the community of nations, even though they were revolutionaries; he urged them to be a mature people responsible for all their actions; and he proclaimed that all forms of extremism were dangerous, for inevitably they made it impossible for the battle to be fought chivalrously. From the prime minister of a country at war with Holland, they must have seemed strange words to the guerrillas in the hills. To Sjahrir they were not strange: they were as natural as the air he breathed.

Almost alone of the Asiatic revolutionaries, Sjahrir saw the revolution in moral terms. Trained at the University of Leyden, with a

<sup>1</sup> The Kshatriyas were the members of the Hindu caste dedicated to fighting. The most famous Kshatriya was Gautama Buddha.

consuming passion for philosophy, as his admirable book *Out of Exile* demonstrates, he had only contempt for extremism, and he was determined to bring about the "reasonable revolution." He saw that the Indonesian revolt must be harnessed to something more powerful, more explosive than nationalism. He looked toward the "third force" and a government and a way of life which owed nothing to dictatorship. Indonesia, as he saw it, was to become a sovereign republic, obeying neither Washington nor Moscow, and that he succeeded so well must always be one of the miracles of the Indonesian revolt. More than any other person, by his ability and integrity, and by his understanding of how international forces could be brought to work in favor of the emerging republic, Sjahrir was responsible for directing the revolution into channels where revolutionary exuberance could give place to revolutionary acumen. There were to be no heaven-storming gestures, no torrents of blood, no sudden breaks with the past. Quietly, patiently, employing all the finesse for which the Sumatrans are renowned, he had decided to see to it that the Dutch left Indonesia, and on the ruins of their empire he would erect a socialist state.

There were deep-lying reasons for his decision to employ moderation. The Communists had been a disruptive force ever since the Dutch Social Democrats had brought Communism to Indonesia in the early 1920's, but Communism itself was not so disrupting as the anarchic violence which might have been unloosed as soon as the Japanese departed. It was there, beneath the surface, and sometimes it would break through the crust. In the early months of the revolution there were religious wars, peasant wars, battles between the Christian Amboinese and their Mohammedan neighbours, sudden raids by tribesmen, by sea pirates, by mercenaries. An almost untamable revolutionary ferment was spreading all over the Indies. Conrad had described the life of these islands. Very little had changed. To make Indonesia a unified state would need enormous patience and cunning and help from abroad. Sjahrir placed himself in a position where he could exercise all three. Almost consciously he assumed the part of the *kantjil*, or mouse deer, famous in Indonesian legend for its gentle cunning. There is a story of a *kantjil* which came to a river where the bridges had been blown down and the current was too swift to allow passage. The *kantjil* summoned

the crocodiles, explaining that the emperor had ordered him to make a census. The crocodiles obeyed, fearful of the emperor, until there were so many that they stretched from bank to bank. Then the tiny deer skipped from one crocodile to another, counting "One, two, three," in the merriest voice imaginable, until he reached the opposite bank. In a sense Sjahrir did exactly this. Before Indonesia acquired her full independence, Nationalist China, India, Britain, America, and the Security Council had all been summoned to assist in the rebirth of the state, and Holland found herself placed delicately and tactfully in a series of untenable positions. On a bridge of great powers Indonesia came into her freedom.

On August 17, 1945, Achmed Soekarno declared from the front porch of a suburban villa near Batavia: "We, the people of Indonesia, proclaim the independence of Indonesia. Orders relating to the transfer of power will be issued in due course." At that time the republic was still far from being accomplished. It was to grow slowly over the years, until in the first six months of 1950 it suddenly blossomed in its extraordinary maturity.

How extraordinary that progress was can be seen in those early months, when the revolutionaries were still regrouping their forces. Soekarno had formed his first government, but he possessed no army. The British, ordered to Java by General MacArthur, refused to recognize his government, in very much the same way that General Hodge refused to recognize the government formed at Seoul at the close of the war. Lieutenant-Governor Hubertus van Mook, fresh from Australia, was urging the British to put down the revolutionary government by force; and though the British left at the first opportunity, there followed fourteen months of protracted warfare. The war, however, was probably a blessing in disguise, for with no external enemy to contend with, Indonesia might have disintegrated. The war itself provided the only thing which could cause so many disparate elements to work in unity—a common enemy. The strains and tensions of these early months were increased with the arrival in November of two Communist leaders, long famous in Indonesia, Tan Malaka and Alimin Prawirodirdjo, who set about inaugurating the Communist revolution. They established a Karl Marx Institute in Madioen, created a Red Army, and "liberated" areas in Sumatra, but their main strength resided in Java, where also lay the main strength



of the Republic; and while the Communists and the Republic battled together, both found themselves under the guns of the Dutch. In June, Tan Malaka's Red Guards succeeded in abducting the prime minister, Soetan Sjahrir. Abductions were to become commonplace in time: two and a half years later, as though deliberately imitating the Communists, the Dutch abducted the whole cabinet of the Indonesian Republic at Jogjakarta, interning them in the island of Bangka.<sup>2</sup> Abduction, however, was always undertaken as a last resort, at a moment of despair, and the Communists never regained the strength they possessed during the first nine months of the revolution. Soekarno, a magnificent orator, large, earthy, looking like a peasant who had strayed into politics by mistake, had stolen the thunder of the Communists, for his party promised what the Communists promised, and more. It was he who had raised the battle cry of *Merdeka*—freedom; and it was more the accent he gave to it than the content of the word which stimulated people. Men were drunk with the word when he spoke it. In those early days it was possible to believe that the revolution might succeed overnight. There were to be interminable discussions with the Dutch, Communist uprisings, and economic upheavals as the result of a three-year blockade by Dutch warships, but the pattern of development remained consistent throughout: a minimum of war, the formation of a South Asian bloc with India, a gradual elimination of the Dutch, a socialist government, and the extension of power over the islands. But all these things could only be brought about if there were no internal dissensions, and both the Dutch and the Communists were determined that internal dissensions should continue.

With the signing of the Renville Agreement by the Dutch and the Indonesian leaders on an American warship anchored off Jakarta on January 17, 1948, the closing stages of the struggle for Indonesian independence began. The outlook seemed hopeful for the revolutionaries. A United Nations Committee was now being permanently

<sup>2</sup> In his excellent book *Out of Exile* (John Day, 1949, p. 256) Soetan Sjahrir relates how in the early morning of August 14, 1945, Hatta and Soekarno were kidnapped by students and held in a garden about thirty miles from Batavia. The students were insisting that Hatta and Soekarno should announce the Declaration of Independence, but it was not read until the morning of the 17th. The two leaders were then released.

employed to see that the truce was kept. Enormous areas of Indonesia were to be controlled by the Dutch under the agreement, including Borneo, the Great East, and large segments of Java and Sumatra, but in return there was to be a resumption of trade, civil liberties were to be protected, and carefully limited areas of Java and Sumatra were to be under the sole control of the Republic of Indonesia. Accordingly, thousands of armed troops evacuated the territories held by the Dutch, and with their coming the newly formed Republic had to contend with problems of unemployment and security. A Rationalization Program was drawn up. Plans for large-scale settlement were produced, and it was hoped that the underpopulated areas of Sumatra would solve the problem of overpopulation in Java. It was a hope that had once attracted the Dutch, and it seems to have been one of those wistful hopes which so often occurred to the Indonesian leaders. Unrest increased. The socialist party split into two segments, with Sjarifoeddin, who had been minister of defense during the early years of the Republic, forming an extreme socialist wing. The split was to have important consequences later in the year. Sjarifoeddin was a Christian, a formidable guerilla leader, and a man who had been imprisoned three times for his ideas, twice by the Dutch, who accused him of being a Communist, and once by the Japanese, who tortured him with the famous water torture and then sentenced him to death, a sentence which would have been carried out if Hatta, at that time collaborating with the Japanese, had not appealed for his release and guaranteed his good behavior. The threat of civil war was now apparent, so apparent, indeed, that strenuous efforts were made to prevent it, with Hatta and Soekarno working "like demons," as they said, to prevent the catastrophe. When the civil war did break out, it came from a totally unexpected quarter, and was neither so serious nor so widespread as the government had feared.

In May, 1947, when Sjarifoeddin was premier, the young Communist leader Soeripno was sent to Prague to conclude agreements with the eastern European governments. The agreements were to be principally trade agreements, and the mission had the blessing of Soekarno. Almost as soon as Soeripno arrived in Prague, he announced that he had signed a pact with the Soviet Union. Immediately recalled, he delayed his departure as long as possible, arriving

in Indonesia only on August 12. With him in the airplane was his "secretary," a heavily built man who had left Java in 1925 and spent all the intervening years in Moscow. He went under the name Soeparto, but previously he had been known as Moeso, and no one knew his real name. He had been high in the councils of the Indonesian Communist party before he fled to Russia, and he had been something of a legend in the days when the party was actively engaged in terrorism against the Dutch. Two weeks after he arrived, he revealed himself at a meeting of the Central Committee of the party. He was acclaimed. Alimin immediately stepped down from the general-secretaryship of the party, and Moeso began a campaign to denounce the Republican government. He denounced the Renville Agreement, and in so doing he openly invited a Dutch attack, for a Dutch invasion of the Republic would offer the Communists an opportunity to capture the leadership of the Indonesian nationalist movement. By September 12, fearing that the Republic was about to disintegrate, the Dutch began to advance over the boundaries settled by the Renville Agreement. In the ensuing confusion Moeso proclaimed the establishment of a central Java soviet at Madioen, having first called upon Hatta to resign.

He could not have chosen a better moment, and it may have occurred to him that within a few weeks the red flag would be flying through all the villages of Java, while the Dutch moved into the cities formerly occupied by the Republic. He would have been content to wage a guerrilla war on a massive scale, and he might well have succeeded, for the left wing of the socialist party had come over to his side, if Hatta had not acted with surprising speed. Hatta immediately outlawed the Indonesian Communist party and sent his best troops against Madioen; and when the Dutch offered to send troops to assist him, he contemptuously refused their assistance. The war was brief and bitter. Moeso and Sjarifoeddin were captured and shot, and within the space of two weeks 20,000 guerrillas were rounded up. Mostly they were illiterate peasants, with a core of perhaps 2,000 Stalinists. When the fighting was over, and the Republic was licking its wounds, having witnessed a grim foretaste of what a Communist-inspired general uprising might have been, Mohammed Natsir, the minister of information, announced: "Henceforward we must look to the West."

Of all the leftist organizations there now remained only Sjahrir's socialists. Sjahrir himself was heartbroken. He had known Sjarifoeddin intimately. When news was received that Sjarifoeddin had been captured, he had immediately gone to Hatta and demanded that Sjarifoeddin should face a public trial rather than a military court. Hatta agreed, but by the time the order had been transmitted to Madioen, Sjarifoeddin was dead. He had announced shortly before his death that he had been secretly a Communist since 1937. It was a strange and inexplicable announcement. He had himself in February, 1946, arrested the ringleaders of a Communist revolt. He was known to have agreed in public with Sjahrir's theory of the "reasonable revolution." He had sent the armies he had formed against Communist guerrillas. Yet, as time went on, though the mystery remained, it became clear that throughout most of his revolutionary career he had maintained secret contacts with the Communists, and it is possible to believe that he was saying no more than the truth when he declared that he had been working deviously toward a Communist uprising. At Madioen the five leaders of the revolt had been Moeso, Sjarifoeddin, Alimin, Soeripno, and Setiadjit; and the last, who had once been a vice premier of the Republic and vice minister of communications, had also posed as a moderate socialist.

In December, while the Republic was still recovering from the Madioen rebellion, there occurred the strangest and the most inconsequential of Dutch military interventions. Sending paratroopers to Jogjakarta, the Dutch arrested the whole of the Republican Government. Soekarno, Hatta, Sjahrir, Hadji Agoes Salim, and eight others were sent to live in a boardinghouse surrounded with barbed wire on the island of Bangka. This extraordinary action sealed the fate of the Dutch. They had not reckoned with world opinion. The United Nations Good Offices Committee telegraphed to Lake Success: "In commencing military operations on December 19, the Dutch Government acted in violation of its obligations under the Renville Truce Agreement." It was enough. The United Nations were outraged. There came from New York immediate orders that the Dutch should cease fire and release the Indonesian leaders; both these orders were disobeyed; and when on January 1, 1949, Pundit Nehru announced that his government had invited thirteen other eastern

governments to consider the Indonesian question, and three weeks later issued an ultimatum, Dutch prestige in the East had fallen beyond recovery. Gradually, piece by piece, the territory conquered by the Dutch was restored, but it was not until July 1 that Jogjakarta was returned to the Republic, and not until the beginning of August that the cease fire was sounded. By then the Indonesians were in a position to demand sovereignty on their own terms.

At the Round Table Conference, which officially opened on August 23 at The Hague, in the historic Hall of the Knights, where the States-General of the Republic of the United Netherlands had declared in 1581 its independence of Spain, Hatta confronted the Dutch with a *fait accompli*. The cards were in his hands. There were delays, quarrels on the definitions of words, even secret meetings by the Steering Committee in near-by Namur in Belgium, but the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty was written by Hatta, and it said very simply, "The Kingdom of the Netherlands unconditionally and irrevocably transfers complete sovereignty over Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia." There was considerable discussion concerning the union of the two countries under the Crown, but according to the final statute the Union was no more than "an organized cooperation on the basis of free will and equality in status with equal rights," with "the Queen and her lawful successors" as the head of the Union. Dutch troops were to be withdrawn six months after the transfer of sovereignty. The new Republic would take over the public debt, and there were various subsidiary agreements concerning economic and cultural matters, while the sovereignty of the republic was assured: she could send and receive ambassadors, sign treaties, ask for foreign loans, issue passports, and at the end of a year hold elections. Simultaneously in Batavia and The Hague symbolic acts were performed to usher the new state into existence. In Batavia the Dutch tricolor was struck and the red-white Indonesian flag was hoisted in its stead, while in the Dam Palace Queen Juliana uttered a speech from the throne which effectively severed the 350-year-old connection between the two countries.

It was not yet, however, the end. There had existed over many years of the Dutch occupation a peculiar fragmentation of the In-

dies. An immense number of sultanates divided the islands: these still existed.<sup>3</sup> Nearly every island had its sultanate and resident commissioner, and at the conference at The Hague the Dutch had clearly hoped that the fragmentation would continue. Altogether the United States of Indonesia numbered at the time of the Round Table Conference sixteen states, of which the Republic of Indonesia, though the richest and most powerful, occupying half of Java and eight-tenths of Sumatra, was only one. The remaining fifteen states were each to have a voice in the government of the Republic. It was as though the British had left India, insisting that the princely states should remain autonomous within the limits of a wide federation. The Dutch had not reckoned with the Indonesian leaders who observed that there was nothing in the treaty which forbade the fifteen states from dissolving themselves. One after another, in the spring and summer of 1950, the heterogeneous governments of the islands vanished and gave place to the central government. Hardly ever before, and certainly never within recent times, have so many governments liquidated themselves in so short a time.

The winter of 1949 was the turning point. The old guard was passing. Sjarifoeddin and Soedirman, the commanders of the early revolutionary armies, were dead, one from the firing squad and the other from overwork, and somehow their deaths illustrated the old theory that there can be no revolution without shock troops and no stable government until the leaders of the shock troops are killed. Gradually power was being gathered into the hands of the central government. There were still three or four armed brigades of Tan Malaka's Communists working with the Indonesian Army in East Java, rather as Irgun Zvai Leumi worked with Haganah; they were still a force to be reckoned with, working underground, searching for leadership, the terrorists terrorized at last, but still vicious. At the Peking Conference of Trade Unions, Ali Mardjono had bitterly denounced Soekarno and Hatta, saying they were responsible for the deaths of 1,800,000 Indonesian workers in the Japanese labor camps. The statement could hardly be proved, and still less could he prove the statement that Sjarifoeddin had led the Indonesian Communist party

<sup>3</sup> In East Sumatra alone there were 21 Sultanates: altogether there were 279 Sultanates dotted among the islands, tracing their establishment to the pre-Islamic as well as the pre-Dutch era.

since its reestablishment in 1935; but though what he said was unimportant, the manner of it was dangerous in the extreme: there were undertones of explosive violence and threats of sudden upheavals.

Other dangers emerged. Darul Islam, numbering 10,000 to 15,000 fighters, mainly in West Java, armed with captured 1948-model Bren guns, was on the march. The Communists were following the same tactics they had pursued in Hyderabad and Malaya: they were making common cause with the rabid nationalist groups. Communists, together with Darul Islam, began to seek the ear of Wiranata Kusumah, sultan of Pasundan (West Java). It was their last chance. They had failed to acquire power through the Japanese or the Dutch: they would find it in the most reactionary of the sultanates. Wiranata Kusumah openly espoused Darul Islam, which means simply "the Islamic State." The movement had something in common with similar Islamic movements in Pakistan, but more with the Boxers. They inscribed Islamic charms on their bodies, believed themselves invulnerable, and moved across the country with an intrepidity frightening to the untrained police force; their influence extended to the gates of Cheribon and Soerabaja. They possessed an egalitarian slogan, *Sama Rasa, Sama Rata* (All the wealth for all the people). It was an intoxicating slogan. The government was perfectly aware how easily the peasants could be intoxicated, and sent its heaviest armored police forces against them. They were not always successful. A fierce fanaticism lurked in Darul Islam: of all the guerrilla fighters the Indonesians fought, these were probably the worst tempered and the most resourceful. Darul Islam is still a force in Indonesia.

There were outbreaks in other directions. The Dutch colonial army, largely manned by the half-Negroid Ambonese, still remained in the islands. This army had virtually ruled over Indonesia, except for the brief period when Java was conquered by Sir Stamford Raffles. Now denuded of its powers, beaten and baffled, it was inevitable that there should be signs of disaffection. When Captain Paul Westerling, a former officer of the army, led a band of deserters in an unsuccessful attack on Bandoeng, after having previously led a revolt known as the "Celebes Massacre" in 1946-1947, there were many in the Indonesian Government who began to wonder whether this was only the first of the uprisings to be led by Dutch ex-officers.

Westerling escaped by a Dutch Army bomber to Singapore. He was arrested, thrown into Changi prison, where he broke his cell mate's jaw, and later, as a result of a legal loophole, he returned to Holland. But it was a time of legal loopholes, and during the following months the Republic of the United States of Indonesia examined them one by one, with minute care and with considerable acumen, for it was about this time that Hatta and Soekarno were beginning to envisage the unitarian state which would stretch from Sumatra to Borneo, a huge empire to be governed from Jogjakarta.

The new state was being whispered about when the parliament of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia met in Jakarta on February 15, 1950, though it was not until May 8 that Hatta announced in a broadcast to the East Indonesian people, still theoretically under Dutch influence within the boundaries of the Great East (Negara Indonesia Timur), comprising the copra-rich island of Celebes, the Lesser Sunda Islands, and the Moluccas, that he regarded their eventual severance from Dutch rule as inevitable. Something of the temper of the times, and of the general fear of an outbreak of anarchy, can be seen from the speech which followed closely upon a revolt of insurgents in Ambon, who proclaimed a Republic of the South Moluccas. Mohammed Hatta said:

Political developments are now progressing rapidly. Everywhere the people are demanding the liquidation of the East Indonesian member state and the establishment of a unified Republic of Indonesia in conformity with the proclamation of August 17, 1945. . . . Already a number of East Indonesian states have seceded and joined the Republic. The central government in Jakarta understands the desires of the people, and it is eager to lead the people toward the establishment of the Unified State.

We must now conduct our affairs in an orderly manner to prevent anarchy and the disorders which could only destroy our state. Remember that our state is a judicial one based on the five principles of Indonesian statehood. . . .<sup>4</sup> In fighting for your desires, follow the road to justice and not the one which leads to anarchy. If all the separate parts act only according to their own will, then coordination in administration will vanish, our state will become disorderly, and we will harm our own cause

<sup>4</sup>The five principles, known as *pantjasila*, were written into the Constitution. They stated that the Republic reposed on faith in Allah, democracy, nationalism, social justice, and humaneness.



and lower our sovereignty in the eyes of the world. Our enemy, seeing the disorders, will believe we are not ripe for independence. . . .

There must be no disorders in the administration. During the transitional period everything must be conducted in due order. Schools must continue their lessons, public offices must continue their duties as usual, the wages of public employees must be paid. The financial affairs of the state must not be obstructed. Therefore, during this transitional period, however short it may be, there must be a government in East Indonesia responsible for all the affairs of state. . . .

Because the names of Soekarno and myself are involved in the proclamation of August 17, 1945, we can demand the implementation of this proclamation be carried on in an orderly manner. If you really love us, your leaders, do not link our names with acts of anarchy. We are confident that none of you have a bad purpose, but you must not forget to follow the right path. As I said previously, a Unified State will come.

Nobody opposes this measure. The governments both of East Indonesia and of East Sumatra have agreed to the establishment of the Unified State. The only thing left is to agree upon a procedure for the establishment of the state without harming the cause of the people and the sovereignty of Indonesia in connection with the recognition extended to the Republic of the Unified State of Indonesia by the international world.

The Republic proclaimed on August 17, 1945, will be established. Therefore be patient and remain calm. We have walked a long way already, along the road of Linggadjati, Renville, and the Round-Table Conference. Now we stand before the open gates. There is no need to jump inside and break our legs. Once *Merdeka*, always *Merdeka*.

The importance of the speech cannot be underestimated, for in this proclamation, for it was nothing less, Mohammed Hatta extended the boundaries of the Indonesian Republic a thousand miles to the east, and the great dream of a single empire which would include all the islands of the South Seas within a single commonwealth was brought nearer to fulfillment. In the fifteenth century the Madjapahit Empire had embraced Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and the Malay Peninsula, and the scattered islands had paid tribute. Now it seemed as though the Madjapahit Empire was reviving, to become in the end a formidable power. In the recent history of the Asiatic revolt the extension of Indonesian power over the islands was as momentous as the Chinese Communist conquest of China.

When Mohammed Hatta spoke on a bright May morning from

Jakarta, imploring the people of the Great East not to struggle against the inevitable, warning them cautiously against anarchy, there had already taken place on the mainlands of Sumatra and Java a unification of power which went beyond anything the Dutch had foreseen at the Round Table Conference. Following the conference there was a breathing space of rather less than three months. Then on March 8, 1950, President Soekarno signed the emergency law permitting the various constituent states of the R.U.S.I. to enter the Republic. East Java had already declared for the Republic on February 26. A little more than a week later the state of Pasundan (West Java) declared for the Republic, to be followed by Madura, Central Java, Padang, and Sabang. Bangka followed toward the end of March, with South Sumatra following a day later. The following week was one of unparalleled activity: it was as though all the discordant elements which had made the revolution were at last, in those spring days, meeting at a point of penetration. The ties that bound Indonesia to Holland snapped. A law was passed announcing that the Dutch language would cease to be the medium of instruction in all public schools in West Java: inevitably it would soon cease to be taught in the Indonesian schools anywhere. Ministers and plenipotentiaries were being appointed and received, and the cry was being raised for recognition of Viet-Minh and Communist China. The excitement was maintained when, on April 6, Captain Andi Abdul Aziz, a former lieutenant of "Turk" Westerling, rushed the Republican Army Headquarters at Makassar, the capital of the Great East. As though the dizzy pace had to be kept up to the end, Sultan Hamid II of Pontianak (West Borneo), the only surviving son of Sjarif Hamid Al-Kadri, whose dynasty had been almost completely destroyed by the Japanese, was discovered plotting against the government. He had been arrested early in April for apparent complicity with the Westerling *affaire*; now, by a hundred obscure threads, followed patiently by the president and the prime minister, who found themselves almost delighted by the complexities unfolded before them, they learned that Sultan Hamid had sketched a blueprint for a reign of terror which would have extended throughout Java. An extraordinary power resided in the hands of the young Sultan of Jogjakarta. He had joined the revolution in its earliest stages; he had been an efficient commander in the field; he was loyal

to Hatta and Soekarno; and of all the hereditary princes he had the longest title to his land. Sultan Hamid was determined to strike him down, take over the Ministry of Defense, which was in the possession of the Sultan of Jogjakarta, and rule over the now enlarged Empire of Indonesia. As he sat in prison, his own province of West Borneo joined the Union.<sup>5</sup>

As spring gave place to summer, the pace of work increased. The Federal Parliament was busy with the tasks arising from the transfer of power: new administrations had to be formed, a new army had to be built. Highways and railways were restored, new bridges were built, the six universities founded in the first year of the Republic were combed for engineers, managers, foreign-language students. The revolt at Makassar had ended without much bloodshed, and except for the hard-bitten Amboinese, the traditional defenders of Dutch rule, there was almost none who opposed the Unified State. Rivalries had not crystallized. The deep-seated fear of a reign of anarchy, a loosening of all bonds, remained.

It was at this moment in the development of the Unified State of Indonesia that a visitor came from abroad whose presence (for he acted very much as a catalytic agent) gave assurance to the revolutionaries. Nehru had also unified India. The states of the maharajas had been largely taken from them. He was faced with many of the same problems which afflicted the Indonesians. There had been a time when Indonesia had been part of an Indian Empire, and the ties that bound the two countries together were of a kind that can be appreciated better in the East than in the West. Nehru arrived on the Indian Navy's flagship *Delhi* on June 7, and immediately hurled himself into a frightening round of activities. He went everywhere, saw everyone, climbed mountains, made speeches at all the rail stops, and fulfilled a long cherished ambition to visit Bali. But the most important part of his work lay simply in the repeated iteration of Asia's place in the world, and the prospects which faced the new revolutionary states. As always, he looked young when he wore his Gandhi cap, though in fact he was a grandfather and he had

<sup>5</sup> Sultan Hamid of West Borneo was a former guards' officer in the Dutch Army and one of the Indonesian delegates to the Round Table Conference. He was minister without portfolio, and his defection may reasonably be accounted to thwarted ambition.

brought his grandchildren with him. On the second day he made a speech on the theme of unity, precisely the theme which was uppermost in the minds of the members of the provisional government, for the Unified State of Indonesia had not yet come into being and there were still possibilities of disturbance in the islands. The speech suffers a little from the use of words which have lost their polish by ceaseless repetition, but the main intention is clear: sooner or later there would be an alliance between the unified states of India and Indonesia. He said:

We must build up and maintain our unity, and our people must all be equal sharers in our freedom. We must keep true to our ancient ideals. We must build up modern states in which all our people, of whatever race or creed, have an equal place and an equal responsibility.

The Asiatic countries have shaken off the colonial yoke; and this is one of the greatest events of the age, but we must not shut ourselves up in nationalistic self-satisfaction. Asiatic countries should cooperate as closely as possible to support all the endeavors which are being made for world peace. India must cooperate with Indonesia, especially. The two countries must help each other to win the peace. Precisely because we are nationalists, we must also be internationalists, for we cannot evade world problems of peace and security: world peace is necessary for the renaissance of Asia.

In the past there has been a tendency to think of Asia as the outer fringe of the world. If people in the West still cling to this fallacy, they will realize their error soon enough. Indeed, Asia today is gradually becoming the main center of the forces at play and at conflict, and the fate of the world may well depend on the interaction of the forces working upon Asia.

I am convinced that the progress of my country, as well as yours, depends upon adopting the basic approach which Mahatma Gandhi taught us. Nations have almost always attained their freedom by violent revolution, but Mahatma Gandhi showed us another way. That method did not do away with blood, tears, or suffering, but it did reduce the extent of suffering and lessened the hatred and violence that normally accompany such struggles. This is an achievement worthy of note, and it may well be a lesson for us in solving the great problems that confront us today.

At the time foreign observers at Jakarta reported that Nehru's visit possessed no very great political significance, perhaps no political significance at all. They were in error; and for once the minister

of propaganda, who announced that the visit had epochal significance, was nearer the truth. To survive, India and Indonesia needed each other: there was an urgent necessity that the two countries should themselves form a kind of unity. Together they might be able to sway Southeast Asia; alone, the task was beyond them. It is against this background that the symbolical acts which Nehru and Mohammed Hatta performed together should be understood. Their embraces, their journey to the volcanic peak of Papandayan, where they signed their names on a memorial stone, the extraordinary warmth with which they were greeted everywhere, all these suggested a real unity which might one day bring about by force of circumstances the United States of India and Indonesia.

All through that summer symbolism played a part in the growth of the young Republic. Nehru, throwing flowers into the rivers of Java at places where battles had been fought, the K.N.I.L. solemnly folding up its battle flags and flying off with them to Holland in a bomber, the last parades and the last farewells: all these were events of profound political significance to South Asia, and it would be dangerous to minimize them. The Indonesians felt that there was even symbolism in the sudden eruption of Krakatau, the famous volcanic island which had erupted in 1883, then sunk below the sea, to emerge at intervals. They remembered that Krakatau had colored the sunsets all over the world with flaring colors; now, as it erupted, it seemed as though the earth itself were firing the salute for the departing Dutch army. The official disbandment of the Royal Netherlands East Indian Army occurred on July 26. Less than three weeks later, fulfilling a promise made exactly five years earlier, Hatta stepped to the microphone and said, "I hereby proclaim the establishment of the Unified State of the Republic of Indonesia, comprising the whole Indonesian territory and the nation of Indonesia." He did not explain the threefold repetition, and perhaps there was no reason to explain it. It was enough that the statement had been made. Within a year two vast empires had been formed under powerful central governments: gradually Asia was assuming the shape of four vast power complexes with the Soviet Union, India, China, and Indonesia as the centers of force. It was possible that India and Indonesia could balance the combined force of the north.

But all this remained for the future, for Hatta's Unified State,

though proclaimed, was not yet in existence. There had come into existence in April a Republic of the South Moluccas, the rebel government centering upon the island of Amboina. It was still rebellious. East Sumatra, with its pro-Communist People's Congress, also held out. Bali, a Hindu enclave surrounded by a thousand Moslem islands, bowed to the inevitable. The Amboinese, who had once massacred the Dutch, and later became the most willing defenders of Dutch rule, fought vigorously in defense of their republic, aided by risings in Makassar, the capital of the Celebes, and in the island of Ceram. The rising in Makassar was put down, but the Republic of the South Moluccas continued to exist with its own flag and its own currency until November. The areas of revolt were small, but the threat was large: the flame lit in a single island on the eastern fringe of the archipelago might travel through all the islands. The defections of Makassar and Amboina were relatively unimportant in themselves, but they raised the question whether the scattered islands could ever be held together within a unified state.

There were other questions. The first task of the new state was to fashion a new government. It was time for change. Hatta was worn out by the battle he had fought to bring the Republic into being; he stepped down, and there stepped into his place his former minister of information, Mohammed Natsir—his full name is Mohammed Natsir gelar Datoek Sinaro Pandjang—a devout Moslem and a former schoolteacher.<sup>6</sup> Like Sjahrir, he came from the Menangkabau district of Sumatra; unlike Sjahrir, he had no particular understanding of the West, and had never been out of Indonesia. The old nationalist party had lost its purpose now that independence had come: in its place there was the Masjoemi, which combined all the Islamic parties which had existed before the war. It was Natsir who had led the world-wide propaganda campaign against the Dutch, and in this he had shown remarkable finesse. He seemed likely to show it in the premiership.

The revolution had left him a host of problems, some of them probably insoluble. There was the problem of New Guinea, claimed by the Dutch; there was the problem of the overpopulation of Java,

<sup>6</sup> He had been vice-chairman of the working committee of the Republic provisional parliament in November, 1945, and succeeded Sjarifoedden as minister of information in January, 1946.

which had increased tenfold in a century, and there was no hope that the problem could be solved easily by an appeal to settlements in remote islands. Food was another problem: Jakarta, the capital, with a population of 1,200,000, had only barely survived when the rice supplies were cut off during the "police action" and the guerilla wars. There was the problem of reconstruction: in some areas three-quarters of the rubber estates had been deliberately destroyed by the Indonesians as part of the scorched-earth policy against the Dutch. There were problems of security, for small bands of marauders were all over the country. There were problems connected with the 8,000,000 Eurasians, who formed almost a tenth of the total population. The Communist uprising which Ali Mardjono had threatened in Peking might still occur. Darul Islam had not been finally vanquished. But against all these problems there was one concrete and visible accomplishment, and it was one which owed nothing to the Communists: Sjahrir's "reasonable revolution" had been brought about.

## VI

# THE PHILIPPINES: The Rise of Labulabu<sup>1</sup>

Great and noble is he who, although born of the woods and with no knowledge except that of his own native tongue, is possessed of good character, is true to his word and mindful of his dignity and honor. —*Katipunan Oath*

WHEN Mohammed Hatta made an urgent appeal to the scattered islands of the Indies in March, 1950, to group together within the framework of the Unified State of Indonesia, he was bringing to birth a new and larger republic, but at the same time he was admitting the prevalence of a state of anarchy, or potential anarchy, in many of the islands. His republic was not yet born. The Philippine Republic was born four years earlier, when the United States granted full independence to the islands on July 4, 1946; but the same problems of anarchy remained, there was the same recent burning memory of conquest, and there were the same agrarian problems to be faced. In 1950 the Government of Indonesia was, however, in a stronger position than the Government of the Philippines. Why?

When Commodore George Dewey led his squadron of gunboats and cruisers into Manila Bay on the morning of May 1, 1898, he was following a long tradition of colonialism, and his fleet represented one of the last of the great waves of conquest to be flung against

<sup>1</sup> A Tagalog word meaning riot, skirmish, free-for-all.



Asia. The Spaniards had ruled the islands for centuries, but their rule, though feudal, had tended to be curiously remote and inefficient. They established churches and schools and opposed rebellions, publicly garroting the rebels when they were captured; they conscripted labor and lived in small feudal enclaves surrounded by peasants who detested them and could easily have put an end to their rule if they had been organized. They were not organized. In the long history of rebellions fought against the Spanish since 1574, when the Spanish flag was first raised over the islands, no concerted and carefully planned rebellion ever took place. When rebellions did occur, they took the form of wild uprisings or grandiloquent attempts, usually by mestizos, to assert themselves as kings or emperors. A young mestizo army officer proclaimed himself emperor, a young backwoodsman proclaimed himself king, a former student of holy orders called Apolinario la Cruz raised the flag of the Brotherhood of San Juan, allied himself with the Negritos, and fought against the Spaniards for some months before he was executed; there were revolts in the separate islands and revolts by the Chinese in Manila, but never any revolt which was not put down with ease.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, two revolutionaries, one a distinguished scientist, the other the almost uneducated son of a poor workingman in Manila, sparked the revolt. José Rizal was an oculist, a novelist, an ethnologist whose collection was bought by the University of Dresden, a zoologist who classified the animal life in remote regions of the Philippines, and a linguist who was said to be able to read Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, German, English, Japanese, and Hebrew with equal fluency, a fact which may perhaps be accounted for by his mixed ancestry, for he was partly Chinese, partly Japanese, and there were predominant Tagalog and Ilokano strains in him. He was a novelist whose book *Noli me tangere* had earned the deserved praise of William Dean Howells. When he founded in July, 1892, the secret society called La Liga filipina, his intention appears to have been simply to found a society which would work within the framework of the Spanish occupation: it has never been proved that he either intended or desired to be more than a reformer. But his fantastic gifts, his authority among the Filipinos, and the legends associated with his name made him inev-

itably the leader of any revolt which might take place; and when a revolt occurred in 1896, though he was on his way to Cuba to serve as an interne in a yellow-fever hospital, he was arrested by the Spanish in Barcelona, brought back to the Philippines, tried, and sentenced to death. On the night before his execution he wrote a poem which demonstrated the stature of the man: it is very quiet, very assured, and entirely lacking in heroics. In the poem he said simply that he was laying down his life for the Filipinos and was perfectly content that it should be so.

By a strange coincidence, on the night of Rizal's arrest, Andrés Bonifacio was forming in a suburb of Manila a secret revolutionary society dedicated to obtaining power by violent means and called the Katipunan.<sup>2</sup> No authentic constitution of the secret society remains, but there exist a number of oaths which the Katipunans were compelled to swear to. Usually they take the form of decalogues. They are written spiritedly in Tagalog. They combine Spanish conceptions of honor with revolutionary appeals to freedom, and they have about them the quietly despairing quality which is to be found in José Rizal's last poem. Though the Katipunan movement later degenerated, these five or six decalogues are among the most moving documents which have come from the revolutionary Far East.<sup>3</sup> Immediately after the execution of Rizal, the Katipunans came out into the open and proclaimed the Republic.

There followed a revolution which assumed to a quite extraordinary degree the same pattern of revolt which occurred in many Oriental countries nearly fifty years later. The native revolutionaries, having attacked one colonial power and reduced it to powerlessness, found themselves confronted with another. Hazard played in favor of colonialism. The Katipunans had organized the revolt, captured quantities of Spanish equipment, and under Emilio Aguinaldo were pursuing a relentless guerrilla war. The American consul in Manila reported to Washington on February 22, 1898, after saying that there were battles almost daily and that the Crown forces were

<sup>2</sup> Katipunan is an abbreviation of the full title of the society, which was originally *Kataas-taasan Kagalang-lalang Katipunan ng Bayan* (Most High and Most Venerable Association of the Sons of the Nation).

<sup>3</sup> Two of the Katipunan decalogues are given in Charles Edward Russell's *The Outlook for the Philippines* (New York, Century Co., 1922), and there is another in my *The Revolt of Asia* (New York, John Day & Co., Inc., 1947).

unable to dislodge a rebel army within ten miles of Manila: "A republic is organized here, as in Cuba. Insurgents are being armed and drilled; are rapidly increasing in numbers and efficiency." In March the consul was reporting, "Rebels getting arms, money and friends, and *they outnumber the Spaniards, resident and soldiery, probably one hundred to one.*" At such a moment, with the Spanish empire in the Philippines crumbling and the insurgent forces pressing their attacks on Manila, Commodore Dewey attacked, having comparatively little interest in the Philippines themselves, but determined to establish a basis from which the partition of China could be supervised from a convenient cluster of islands near the Chinese shore.<sup>4</sup>

The consequences of Commodore Dewey's action could have been foreseen. There was no close liaison with the Filipino revolutionaries, who inevitably looked with disfavor on the claims of a new colonial power when they had resoundingly defeated another; and the Americans were forced to place Spanish prisoners in the hands of the Filipino insurgents. There were other difficulties more threatening than the attitude of the rebels. Like carrion coming to the plundered carcass, other colonial powers attempted to intervene: two British cruisers, two German cruisers, a French, and a Japanese cruiser anchored in Manila Bay. But none of these colonial powers was able to establish itself in the Philippines; Dewey had determined upon conquering the islands, arguing that unless America held the Philippines, Britain would emerge as the conqueror of China. But though he succeeded in convincing the powers that America had abundant right to hold the Philippines alone, his difficulties had only just begun. On May 24, 1898, three weeks after he had led his battle fleet into the bay, he was surprised to learn that Aguinaldo had issued a proclamation addressed to the Philippine people, in which he said that America clearly recognized the Filipinos to be "sufficiently civilized and capable of governing for ourselves our unfortunate country." On June 18 Aguinaldo proclaimed a dictatorship, and five days later he proclaimed the establishment

<sup>4</sup> "By a morning's battle we had secured a base in the Far East at a juncture in international relations when the parcelling out of China among the European powers seemed imminent." *Autobiography of George Dewey, Admiral of the Navy* (New York, 1913), p. 251.

of a revolutionary government, while early in August he appealed to foreign governments to recognize the independence of the Philippine Islands. There followed desultory negotiations between the Americans and the rebels. Neither side had any intention of surrendering its powers, and both sides based their claims on conquest. Inevitably there occurred a clash, and on the night of February 4, 1899, American troops opened fire on a Filipino patrol which had deliberately approached American lines; there followed a guerrilla war which lasted four and a half years.

The importance of this war lies in its lessons for today. Exactly the same kind of guerrilla war was fought by the revolutionary Asiatic states after the defeat of Japan. It was a harsh and horrible war with excesses committed by both sides. The guerrillas were fighting in the forests and jungles, with all the advantages which that kind of warfare allows them. They dug traps, covered them lightly with earth, and placed poisoned stakes inside; they carefully contrived trip wires which, when touched, released poisoned arrows; they delighted in ambushes, and the hills in the north of Luzon gave them secure retreats. They were encouraged "to learn the verb *dukutar*," which meant to kill. They killed everyone who was suspected of being a traitor to the revolutionary cause, and many were killed on the flimsiest suspicions. Guerrillas were encouraged to swear an oath offering implicit obedience only to God and the Revolutionary Government. Uprisings occurred in Cebu and Panay. Nor were the Americans incapable of gratuitous violence: they employed the "water torture" on prisoners and killed nearly as ruthlessly as the guerrillas. But they possessed one overriding advantage over the guerrillas: they formed an army in being. The guerrilla forces were never in any sense an army. Major M. J. R. Taylor, who was present during the greater part of the war, summed up the particular dangers of this kind of warfare in the manuscript which was later used by Dean C. Worcester in his classic account of the war. He said:

A force like Aguinaldo's could not be surrendered. It had always been torn by internal dissensions and the bonds of discipline had always been very lax. It had originally been held together by a lively expectation of the advantages to be obtained from the pillage of Manila. That hope had disappeared, and the leaders had become the lords of life and property each in his own province. It was a force which could disintegrate, but

could not surrender. Only armies can do that. Forces over which their leaders have lost all except nominal control when beaten do not surrender. They disintegrate by passing through the stages of guerrilla warfare, of armed bands of highwaymen, of sturdy beggars who at opportune moments resort to petty larceny.<sup>5</sup>

There were other reasons for the collapse of the guerrilla forces. They were poorly led by a man whose thirst for power assumed dangerous proportions. Brilliant and erratic, with a love of pomp and ceremony and gaudy uniforms, calling himself the captain-general and making oblique references to his own royal court, Emilio Aguinaldo, after having first led the Filipino insurgents well, fell into the trap which lies open before all dictators. His secretary, a young, self-educated scholar who suffered from paralysis, Apolinario Mabini, said of him: "He did not judge the merits of men by their capacity, character or patriotism, but by the degree of friendship and relationship which bound them to him; and wishing to have his favorites always ready to sacrifice themselves for him, he showed himself complaisant to their faults. Having thus secured the people, the people deserted him." Mabini was a wise revolutionary and knew the people well.

But the guerrilla war went on even when Aguinaldo had surrendered and called upon the Filipinos to lay down their arms. It was inevitable in the nature of things that it should continue, not only because a guerrilla force cannot surrender but also because the passionate desire for independence continued long after Aguinaldo had come down from the hills. The manner in which the guerrillas fought was surprisingly similar to present-day guerrilla fighting in Viet-Nam and Malaya. The insurgents levied forced contributions from the small outlying villages and hamlets and threatened them with death if they should reveal their positions. The sons of the villagers were made to join the insurgent ranks. They made a law that no insurgent should ever allow his weapons to be captured, but should destroy his weapon and if necessary sacrifice his life in order to destroy it. There were ceremonial oaths made in the depths of the forest at night. Terror, permanent and unrelenting, was the chief

<sup>5</sup> Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines Past and Present* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 221. Copyright, 1914 and 1930, by The Macmillan Company.

weapon to be used against the Americans and those who had gone over to their side. There were sudden night raids, deep thrusts into enemy territory; then there would be a return to the villages, the arms would be concealed, and the people who had fought at night were peaceful villagers by day.

There was only one military way in which these raids could be stopped. The guerrillas had to be deprived of their resources, which meant that the small hamlets and villages in outlying districts had to be abandoned. This is in effect what happened. In the provinces of Batangas and Laguna, a clear division was made between habitable and uninhabitable zones, and peasants who refused to enter the zones marked out for them found all their food supplies and even their huts liable to destruction. Here, too, quite unconsciously there developed a peculiar kind of agrarian reform. According to the official instructions issued by General Bell, in command of the operations in these areas, "People will be permitted to move houses from outlying districts should they desire to do so, or to construct temporary shelter for themselves on any vacant land *without compensation to the owner*, and no owner will be permitted to deprive them of the privilege of doing so." Other methods were employed: to put an end to assassinations, it was publicly announced that prisoners of war would be shot whenever assassinations occurred. Oddly enough, the precedent for such retaliation was found in President Lincoln's General Order 100, issued in 1863.

General Bell pursued the only course open to him: almost exactly the same course was to be followed fifty years later by General Sir Harold Briggs in Malaya. In the bloody and unrestrained campaigns which were fought against the Filipinos, parallels can be found in all the battles which occurred whenever insurrectionary movements appeared in Asia. Like the North Koreans, the insurgents were perpetually infiltrating through the American lines; like the followers of Viet-Minh, they worked out a simple and effective agrarian policy of their own, reducing rents and tearing up title deeds; like the Burmese insurgents, they were continually splitting up and forming small separatist armies. They were plagued by the same centrifugal force which plagued the Republic of Indonesia, for separate islands declared their separate independence. The entire island of Negros, for example, declared itself a sovereign independent Republic. The

island of Bohol also declared its independence, remembering that it had twice revolted during the Spanish occupation. One after another the features of the Asiatic revolt as it occurred in 1945 can be recognized in those early months of the century when the Filipino revolt was at its height.

When the war against Japan ended, there also ended the war of independence. Independence had been promised in 1934. By the summer of 1943 President Roosevelt was saying to the Filipino people, "I give you my word that the Republic of the Philippines will be established the moment the power of our Japanese enemies is destroyed . . . and you will be assisted in the full repair of the ravages caused by the war." Unfortunately, this was a promise that could not be fulfilled, for there were ravages which can never be repaired. Some 300,000 Japanese soldiers had passed through the Philippines. The country had been looted, its villages had been destroyed, half the members of the government had turned traitor, and to escape the fury of the Japanese unknown numbers of peasants had taken to the hills. Against the Japanese the Filipinos waged the same kind of war they had waged against the Americans. Gradually a ragged army of guerrillas had come into existence. They called themselves *Hukbalahaps*, a name derived from the first syllables of *Hukbo ng bayan laban sa hapon* (People's Anti-Japanese Army).<sup>6</sup> The army originally included members of all political parties. Luis Taruc, who became the commander in chief of the army after a secret meeting in a forest near Arayat in Pampanga, when members from all political parties met together to discuss the rebellion against the Japanese, was not originally a Communist. He was a follower of the old socialist, Pedro Abad Santos, who fought in the Katipunan ranks, was captured and sentenced to death and finally pardoned. Pedro Abad Santos had led the movement for independence and reform. He accompanied the second independence mission to the United States in 1922; he outlined over a number of years the social reforms necessary in the islands, and more than anyone else he was responsible for bringing the plight of the peasants to the

<sup>6</sup> In 1949 the name was changed to *Hukbo ng mapagpalaya sa bayan* (People's Liberation Army). The change probably reflects a basic change in the organization of the movement, and may have occurred as a result of the Communist victories in China.

notice of the government. On this land where tenants have eight- or ten-acre plots, from which the total crop income rarely exceeded \$250 a year and 50 per cent of the yield went to the landowner, poverty had gone beyond the stage when it could be regarded as a social evil: it had become an endemic disease. It was due partly to ignorance. There was no crop rotation, and only one food crop a year was produced on land which could grow two. Seed was poorly selected, there was little irrigation, and almost nothing had been done to settle the inhabitants of the crowded areas in the virgin islands.<sup>7</sup> Because the landlords controlled the economic and political life of the islands, the Americans found themselves compelled to work with and through them during the occupation; but it was precisely the landlords who had opposed the claims of the Katipunans. The American régime favored the landlords at the expense of the poor peasants. It could hardly do otherwise, not only because the landlords had been their allies but also because a colonial régime inevitably finds itself on the side of the rich. Even when the Americans accepted the *fait accompli* of the division of land which had belonged to the Church, and after negotiating with the Vatican paid the sum of \$7,239,000, they recouped themselves by selling the land back to the peasants at a high rate of interest, with the result that the land gradually returned to the friars who had possessed it before. The American policy did little to encourage the peasants, who could rarely afford the price of the land: the only problem that was solved, and that only temporarily, was the difficult relationship between the peasants and the property-owning Church. Exactly the same policy was to be pursued later in South Korea, with remarkably similar results. The poverty of the peasants, the domination of the caciques, the inadequacy of the primitive farming methods, the absence of friendly societies and of any kind of insurance against bad crops: these were the things that Pedro Abad Santos had thundered against; and when on December 25, 1941, he summoned Luis Taruc to come

<sup>7</sup> The Philippine Government is faced with the same problem of large-scale resettlement that the Indonesian Government faces. Recently new sweeps of virgin land have been opened in Mindanao and Palawan, and it is planned to grow 500,000 tons of rice in these areas. Peasants from the overpopulated areas of Luzon and the Visayans are being induced to settle in the virgin areas. Not unnaturally, there is fierce resistance to the plan, especially from peasants who have farmed their own inadequate land for generations.



to Manila, to discuss the possibilities of launching a permanent rebellion against the Japanese, he invited the young lawyer to see him because Taruc appeared to have the gift of leadership. "There can be no independence without social reform," Pedro Abad Santos told him. "You must go to the woods and fight the Japanese, and at the same time you must reform the systems of land tenure—this above all." There is no reason to believe that either of them was more than a liberal-minded socialist faced with the desperate confusions of a third conquest. But at the first secret meeting where the Hukbalahaps formed an army, the program was declared to be "war against the Japanese and all oppressors." By "oppressors" they meant the landlords.

The behavior of the Hukbalahaps during the war might have suggested they would become a dangerous force in the future. The armed guerrillas were grouped into squadrons of about a hundred men and were sent on foraging expeditions deep into enemy lines. They confiscated the lands of collaborationist landlords, divided them among the peasants, destroyed title deeds, and issued, surprisingly, orders that Church lands were to remain untouched. They claimed that during the course of the war they fought 1,200 engagements and inflicted 25,000 casualties on the Japanese. There is no reason to disbelieve their statement, but there is every reason to believe that they intended to take control of the country when the war was over: they saw themselves as the inheritors of the Katipunan tradition, which possessed deep roots among the peasantry. They failed to take over the country, for the government-in-exile still held the regard of most of the Filipinos, and the very nature of the reconquest made it certain that American influence would predominate. There were a hundred thousand guerrillas under arms. What could be done with them?

Under more normal circumstances it is possible that they could have been integrated into the army, but these were not normal circumstances. Collaborationists were not punished; the caciques had returned to power; the Church lands were still undivided, and there were few signs of the land reform which the peasants ardently desired. Taruc became a member of parliament. He was offered a portfolio, which he refused. He pointed out that the Hukbalahaps had received official American Army recognition, and he demanded that

his guerrillas be paid; there were interminable delays in paying them. The United States supported the Roxas administration, as later it was to support the Syngman Rhee administration, without inquiring whether it possessed popular support or whether it had rigged the elections, for in a country like the Philippines, consisting largely of small hamlets buried in the depths of the hills, nothing was easier than to make mistakes in counting the ballots. Taruc accused the government of rigging ballots, of combining with the caciques, of subservience to American designs, and of a policy which did not take the peasants into account. Though some of his strictures were true, and American interference in the Philippine economy suggested, even before it occurred, that an act would be passed which would make the Philippines a kind of semicolony, there was a tone in his voice which suggested that he was himself a potential dictator, suffering from the same disease which afflicted Aguinaldo. He was coming more and more under Communist influence. Together with Alejandrino, his able chief of staff, he had been arrested shortly after the liberation, and though he was released almost immediately afterward, the bitterness had sunk deep in his soul. He determined upon continued guerrilla war, and since America had promised complete liberation to the Philippines, he was no longer under the necessity of counting on American support for his enemies. In this he was wrong. America supported the government in power: the collaborationists were given clean bills of health by General MacArthur, though in some cases it remained exceedingly doubtful whether they should have been so lightly excused, and a government of caciques took the place of the peasant government which Taruc had desired.

By 1947 the fighting was almost continual, with sporadic engagements nearly every day, sudden night raids, large-scale captures of ammunition. The Hukbalahaps had become a threat to the very existence of the government by March, 1948, when they were outlawed, under a proclamation issued by Roxas shortly before his own death. Shortly afterward, the new president, Elpidio Quirino, in an effort to avert all-out war, proclaimed an amnesty. They were given a limited period in which to surrender their arms. Taruc accepted the amnesty, came to Manila, brought a few truckloads of rifles and twenty machine guns, and stated publicly that the Hukbalahaps

had forsworn the path of revolutionary violence. He seems to have performed the act of surrender with good grace, but it was observed that he was no longer his own master: the Communists were increasingly in command of the Hukbalahaps, and with the death of Dr. Vicente Lava, a graduate of Columbia University and an outstanding chemist, the moderate influence within the ranks of the Hukbalahaps no longer possessed a protector. A few weeks later Taruc disappeared quietly from Manila. The war went on.

It was a war fought with all the experience of fifty years of revolution behind the Hukbalahaps. They were Communist only in the sense that there were Communists among the leaders; and if they had learned from the Chinese Communists, they were also for the most part deadly enemies of the Chinese in the Philippines. They employed terrorist methods chiefly because they were too ill-equipped to employ any other methods; in the whole of the Philippines there were hardly more than 3,000 armed guerrillas. Their raids could take the form of sudden attacks on the mansions on large estates; they also took the form of quiet incursions into remote villages where they offered to buy up supplies and equipment, and committed no greater crime than perhaps robbing a Chinese merchant, traditionally fair game in the Philippines. They were never well organized, though their raids were sometimes well planned, as when in August, 1950, eleven concerted raids led to the capture of Santa Cruz, the capital of Laguna Province, and ten other towns were held for short periods. At Tarlac, seventy miles north of Manila, they left 100 dead, losing 20 themselves. Finally they were driven back to the canebrakes and the mountains by tanks. It was that kind of war. But to say that the Hukbalahaps have an organization completely rooted within the country would be to deny the history of Filipino rebellions. In February, 1950, the Philippine Senate committee obtained a constabulary intelligence estimate of 110,000 Hukbalahaps in the two central Luzon provinces of Pampanga and Nueva Ecija, but the same source estimated the total Hukbalahap combat force as 3,000.<sup>8</sup> If their numbers had really amounted to 110,000 men, the damage they could have inflicted would have been far greater. In fact, the peasants desired to be left alone. They were

<sup>8</sup> A Philippine Army source credits the Hukbalahaps with a considerably higher number of armed guerrillas: 7,000.

weary of Hukbalahap demands, and they were suffering from the oppressions of the constabulary, which behaved exactly like the constabulary in Hyderabad when faced with the same dissident elements: the constabulary became more fearful than the Hukbalahaps. Still more frightening, because more ruthless, were the private constabularies of the landowners, who ruled by a reign of terror, kidnaped and punished villagers suspected to have dealings with the Hukbalahaps, and killed whole families if one member of the family was under suspicion. They burned, plundered, and murdered at will, and obeyed no law except the private law of the landowner; they, more than anyone else, were making it certain that the will of the Hukbalahaps would eventually prevail. The situation became so alarming that on September 23, 1950, President Elpidio Quirino was forced to intervene. He said: "These private armies have gained an unsavory reputation; they have abused the people, who are now more frightened of them than they are frightened of the Hukbalahaps. From now on the enforcement of law and order will be the sole responsibility of the armed forces, the constabulary, and the regular municipal police." Since the municipal police were unlikely to find themselves in the path of the Hukbalahaps, this meant that the enforcement of law and order now rested with the police and the armed forces. But in fact the president's proclamation could hardly alter the situation: the private armies remained, suitably disguised, and the punishments and indignities heaped upon the peasants were unlikely to cease, for the landowners found themselves in desperate straits, and they knew that at any moment the revolt might break out with incredible violence, no longer in the form of short jabbing raids but on a nation-wide basis.

In Malaya as in Korea, the revolution can be contained, for the very shape of the land allows for containment. In the Philippines the difficulties are far greater. The guerrillas work in unexplored territory—there are regions marked "unexplored" less than seventy-five miles from Manila—and in these areas a small band, with a knowledge of the jungle paths and with a large hinterland to retreat to, can have the effect of an army. In Panay, Negros, and Cebu the Hukbalahaps have an even more effective control of the countryside, for there are no large garrisons stationed in these islands. Here, too, they are close to the mainland of Communist China, and for

the last eighteen months there have been occasional visitors from China only too willing to supply equipment and propaganda. Nor has there ever been in the Philippines a strong code of civic responsibility: in the isolated villages and in the towns, the sense of family is more powerful than the sense of communal responsibility, with the result that the close-knit family units tend to shield the erring members who join the Hukbalahaps, and all may become potential members of the revolutionary organization even though only a distant relative has joined them. Though the numbers of the Hukbalahap armed forces are small, and there is an almost total absence of capable military leadership among them, the threat is real, for it is based on their close affiliation with the peasantry. They have a program. They have clearly defined enemies. Unlike the Chinese revolutionaries in Malaya, they belong to their own country. To minimize their potential power would be dangerous, and to accuse them of being Communist is merely silly. They are led by Communists, but their strength comes from despair, from privations, from the singular attitude of the landowners who have consistently prevented the government from carrying out agrarian reform.

In the struggle against the spread of Communism in Asia, the Philippines represent a natural entry point for American influence on social levels. It is here that Americans can learn most easily how deep-rooted is the need for agrarian reform in the East. The Philippine government has excused its actions on the grounds that the laws passed favoring tenants and sharecroppers could not be enforced because of the prevailing disorder. It is as though a doctor would say: "I cannot perform the operation while the patient has a high fever, though of course the fever will lead to his death." Allowing armed militia of the landlords to possess power for so long will probably have greater effect on the political development of the Philippines than any loan. The harm was there and it was not stopped; the peasants inevitably could draw their own conclusions.

American efforts to help the Philippines fed the landlords and the sugar companies, and did little to affect the peasants. The vast quantities of surplus goods, which yielded disappointing revenues, did more harm than good: they assisted the inflation, gave immense wealth to those who bought the surplus property wholesale, and increased the sum total of goods in the black market. The \$200,000,000

in American-administered rehabilitation of public roads and buildings and the budgetary loan of \$60,000,000 obtained in 1946 served a useful purpose, though the contractors made vast profits on the first and the second was needed at a moment of financial crisis, for without it the whole financial structure of the Philippines might have crumbled. Altogether nearly \$2,000,000,000 has been spent in military aid and various grants since 1945, but wages remain as low as \$2 a day in the trades, \$1.75 in government service, and \$0.25 in the fields.<sup>9</sup> Corruption on all government levels remains widespread; the corrupt lie concealed behind their powerful and still more corrupt friends. As in Iran, the large landowners failed to pay taxes, and they too were powerful enough to avoid arrest. As in all corrupt governments, the man who suffers most is the peasant.

Unless the Philippine government can set its house in order and introduce radical land reforms, even at the expense of dispossessing the landlords and taking the land under government control, the march of the Hukbalahaps cannot be stayed. There are only a few armed Hukbalahaps, but even the Philippine Army intelligence is prepared to believe that 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the peasants in Central Luzon support them, if not openly, then secretly; and even if they are not now actively giving support, they will give support when the Hukbalahaps demand it urgently. What is strange is that the government in such desperate straits still relies on the caciques, still believes it can survive in an atmosphere of desolate corruption, wholly irresponsible in its attitude toward the peasants, who outnumber the rest. All the evidence would seem to suggest that the governments of Elpidio Quirino and Chiang Kai-shek have much in common; and Quirino's recent invitation to Chiang Kai-shek and the Generalissimo's visit to the Philippines suggest that his sympathies lie with the lost leader and are incontrovertibly in favor of the reaction, for otherwise Chiang Kai-shek's stay in Manila has no meaning.

Meanwhile the Hukbalahaps are gaining ground. There are people in the Philippines who are perfectly conscious of the fact. The Senate majority leader Tomás Cabili recently denounced the government's policies toward the Hukbalahaps as "utter bankruptcy." He

<sup>9</sup> See an illuminating article by Ford Wilkins in the *New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1950.

went on, "This confession of failure has to be made even if it scares the wits out of American capital or if we lose face abroad." Carlos Romulo, chief of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations, declared at the same time: "Upon the elimination of the Hukbalahaps depends the survival of our democracy or its humiliating descent to the status of a banana republic under a government by *coup d'état*." <sup>10</sup> But it was not a question of eliminating the Hukbalahaps: it was far more a question of integrating the agrarian revolt with government policy. China had fallen to a peasants' revolution, and there was no reason to believe that the Philippines could escape the fate of China unless urgently needed reforms were brought about.

In the Philippines there are about the same number of armed Communists as in Malaya. They make more noise, they are closer to China, they deal with a more tangible problem; it is even possible that they are not as well led as the Chinese Communists in Malaya. As in Malaya, the majority of the armed Hukbalahaps are youths, without much education, with a facility for the parrotlike repetition of Communist phrases, living off the land, terrorized by their own terror, and therefore capable of gratuitous slaughter, but among them there remain a sufficient number who possess a revolutionary dynamic to launch a revolt which would encompass the whole of the islands in time. The government has been warned. With astonishing ignorance it proposes to put down the rising with tanks. Risings are not put down with tanks. They are put down with the least harm by the introduction of social laws which favor the majority rather than the caciques.

If the president of the Philippines should ask himself why it is that the Indonesian Republic is not faced by perpetual Communist uprisings and is well on the road to discovering herself as a powerful force in the world, as far removed from a banana republic as any state can be, it is unlikely that he would find the reason in Sjahrir's theory of the "reasonable revolution," but it is precisely because the Philippines has not suffered a revolution that it is now in a state of decay. No new forces have emerged to captivate the enthusiasm of the people. No new social theories have emerged. The old faces of collaborators are in parliament, and the list of

<sup>10</sup> *Time*, May 1, 1950.

men in office who under almost any other kind of government would face impeachment for corruption daily increases. The report that three brothers of the president, the president of the senate, and the speaker of the House of Representatives had all taken part in immigration scandals involving the entry of Chinese into the Philippines<sup>11</sup> was only one of many reports; and there is a direct correlation between corruption in the Philippine Government and the growth of the Hukbalahaps. Meanwhile Formosa, which may soon be captured by the Chinese Communists, is barely sixty-five miles away.

The growth of the Hukbalahaps has followed an almost inevitable course since the end of the war. Only a revolution profoundly affecting all levels of the government will control them; and this revolution is nowhere in sight. In all the countries of Asia corruption invited armed revolution, and so it would continue until corruption had been put down. The case of the Philippines now looks desperate, for the Hukbalahaps are firmly rooted in their own soil, and they have the advantage of being able to proclaim themselves nationalists as well as revolutionaries determined upon social ends. There are, as we shall see, obvious differences between the Hukbalahaps and the Chinese Communists in Malaya, for the Chinese Communists in the Malayan jungles possessed neither a sense of national purpose nor a program of social reform. "We have both a program and a sense of our brotherhood with one another," said Taruc, shortly after he was released from prison. "And let the government beware." It would seem that the government has hardly a moment to lose.

Towards the end of October, 1950, the Bell Economic Survey Mission to the Philippines presented its report to President Truman. It was a model report, following stringent and careful enquiry. It attacked with some bitterness the recklessness of the Philippine government, which had done nothing positive to bring about economic stability. The mission pointed out that the population had increased by 25 per cent in the last ten years, that real wages were lower than they had been before the war and the finances of the government had become steadily worse and were now critical, while inequalities of income, always large, had become even greater, and prices were three and a half times greater than they were before

<sup>11</sup> *New York Times*, Oct. 8, 1950.



the war. The mission made seven recommendations, urging immediate attention to a stable tax system, reforms in education and the division and redistribution of large private land-holdings. Noting that 56 per cent of the islands' gross national income came from the farms, though the farmers were assisted by only about one-fourth of 1 per cent of the budget, the reported stated:

The Philippine farmer is between two grindstones. On top is the landlord, who often exacts an unjust share of the crop in spite of ineffective legal restrictions to the contrary. Beneath is the deplorably low productivity of the land he works.

The farmer cannot see any avenue of escape. He has no credit except at usurer's rates. There is no counsel to whom he can turn with confidence. He is resistant to change for fear of losing the meager livelihood he and his family possess. The incentive to greater production dies aborning when what he regards as an unjust share of the harvest of his work goes to the landlord.

Nothing could be clearer than the verdict of the Economic Mission; and it seemed reasonably certain that unless the 250 million dollar aid program was put into force immediately, the rot would continue. It was dangerous rot. Gangrene was affecting the heart of the Philippines. There remained a few more months of indecision, but soon enough the battle would have to be fought. It would be ultimately a battle between Taruc's followers and the followers of the Bell Economic Mission.

## VII

# MALAYA: The Faceless Men with Guns

I can see no end to the wealth, prosperity and power which will shine from this island in the tropic seas.

—SIR STAMFORD RAFFLES

WHEN Sir Stamford Raffles, having conquered and lost Java, sailed to Singapore, he saw along the muddy coastline only a few palm-leaf huts and heaps of skulls. He never discovered what the skulls were doing there, but he learned that on this island of red earth there had once been a terrible war and it was believed by the natives that nothing would grow there. In this they were wrong. Over the years the land which had been soaked in blood during the time of the Madjapahit Empire became one of the great centers of Far Eastern trade. From the tin mines in Malaya there passes through Singapore a quarter of the world's supply of tin and three-quarters of the world's supply of rubber. The strange little peninsula dangling out of Asia into tropical seas also possesses a further significance: Malaya dominates the western approaches to China.

The skulls, which Sir Stamford Raffles observed on the mudflats, were seen again when the Japanese occupied Singapore. Then they belonged to executed Englishmen and Chinese. According to the Japanese custom, they were nailed to posts in strategic places and allowed to rot in the summer rains; those who attempted to remove the skulls were beheaded. The Japanese reign of terror was as merciless in Malaya as it had been in China. They had captured Malaya by making forced marches along the roads where they were least

expected—the jungle pathways. It was inevitable that those who opposed them should also take to the jungles; inevitable, too, that the jungles with the trees rooted close together and the poisonous lianas sweeping down from the high branches should leave a mark on the minds of the men who dwelt there. The forest of northern Tonkin and northern Burma possessed all the advantages of guerrilla hideouts. In the jungles of Malaya there was always an enemy more implacable than the Japanese: the jungle itself.

Since the day when Captain Cyril Wild, the official interpreter to the surrender party, bore the white flag to General Yamashita, who was waiting at the Ford Motor Works at Bukit Timah, just outside the city of Singapore, Malaya began to feel the impact of the guerrillas. The war was lost, but the guerrilla war went on, a guerrilla war unlike any that occurred in the East, for the guerrillas were simply contriving to hold out until the end of the war. They possessed no effective political program. They had hoped to impose their leadership on the country when the war ended, but most of the guerrilla leaders were Chinese leftists released from jail only a few days before the surrender. These Chinese despised the Malays, who had helped the Japanese to wheel their bicycles through the forest pathways, and they despised the British and Australian troops, who had surrendered too easily. They possessed, too, the traditional Chinese contempt for the Indians. They were living in another country, under conditions strange to them, without communication with China, among enemies. The Malays and the aboriginals sometimes revealed their hiding places. Throughout the course of the war, a desperate, unknown war was fought in the Malay jungles.

Not all of the guerrillas are determined Communists. Probably less than half subscribe to Communist doctrine; the rest are outcasts, who have put the ways of civilization behind them, enjoying guerrilla life, where there are no laws except the law of survival. It is the presence of these guerrillas which explains the purposeless character of some of the recent murders. By committing excesses which inevitably led to excesses by their enemies, they made their own survival all the more problematical.

In the years before the war, Malaya, and Singapore especially, was an object lesson in cooperation between different nationals. At the naval base Sikh guards, Tamil laborers, Chinese craftsmen and

mechanics and Malayan traders worked peacefully together. Punjabis were stationed within the base. The British ruled, but they were hopelessly outnumbered. The sense of cooperation did not outlast the war. The great wave of revolt which rose in Asia during the war strengthened national feeling, and there came to the Asiatic a new-born consciousness of his poverty. But in Malaya an exasperated sense of nationalism could only apply to the Malays themselves, already outnumbered by the Chinese. The British owed their loyalty to Britain, the Chinese to China, the Indians to India; and increasingly before the war, and to a far greater extent afterward, the Chinese came to accept orders from one or another of the rival factions in China. The Indians obeyed the Indian National Congress, while the Malays traditionally obeyed their sultans. The consciousness of poverty did not apply to the Malays, who were content with their palm trees and rice paddies; it applied, however, to the Chinese contract laborers and the Tamils who worked on the rubber plantations. Each of the different races in Malaya, therefore, possessed different needs, followed different stars, and behaved according to wholly dissimilar culture patterns. What is surprising is that the guerrillas in the jungles could really believe that their uprisings and murders could affect the development of Malaya to any appreciable extent. They had called themselves during the war the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA); it was a characteristic and ominous use of the word "people," for even during the war the guerrilla movement was unpopular with the people, who learned that the Japanese excused themselves for their excesses by pointing to the excesses of the guerrillas. Today the guerrillas in the Malayan jungles have no real point of contact with the people; and to call them, as Moscow radio does, "gallant fighters in the forefront of freedom" and "our brothers-in-arms fighting for justice" is to confuse thuggery with aspirations for freedom.

Yet small bands of roving Communist guerrillas do exist in Malaya, and it is necessary to inquire into their operations and motives. Unlike Viet-Minh, they have no roots in the country; and unlike the Red and White Flag Communists in Burma they have no concerted political plan beyond the avowed intention to remove the British from control. They operate mysteriously and secretly—no one has yet been able to determine their numbers, and the figure of 3,000

to 5,000, which has been used for two years, has no particular validity. No one knows the name of their present leaders or where their central organization operates, though it is a fairly reasonable guess that the central organization is in Singapore itself. It is known that committees are in existence within each of the nine states of the Federation of Malaya and in the colony of Singapore, and there is some evidence to suggest that there exist committees in the settlements of Penang and Malacca. From time to time reports are heard of "training areas" and "rest zones" across the border in Thailand, but their existence has never been adequately proved. They possess no "liberated areas," though it is known that large spaces of jungle in Central Malaya are shared by them with the aboriginal Sakai. Their weapons are still largely the British weapons which they took with them into the jungles. More than 1,100 have been killed in battle, about 800 have been arrested, and some 500 have been captured. Gradually the older guerrillas have been eliminated by death, disease, or capture, and the surprising youth of those who have been captured recently suggests that most of the survivors are boys from the "squatter farms" bordering on the jungles. There are about four hundred thousand of these "squatters," all of them Chinese market gardeners, and many of them settled on vacant land as refugees from the cities when the Japanese entered Malaya. These squatters have provided information, money, and weapons to the guerrillas; it is not impossible that over the years they have provided the main body of recruits to the guerrilla forces. The guerrillas have the enormous advantage of being a secret army operating over a wide territory, able to bring their full strength against scattered villages. Their vengeance is never mild, and their demands are usually extortionate. The underlying logic of their campaigns is expressed in a characteristic letter written by them and left at night in one of the remote hamlets.

If you offend the British, you will be taken to a detention camp and fed well. You will not lose your property, although you may be deported to China. If you offend us, you will be killed. It is better to offend the British.

The consequences of such tactics are inevitable: the government has been compelled to introduce the death penalty for those who

have been known to assist the guerrillas, even when they did so under threats.

Early in 1949 a government commission reported that the squatters represented an economic advantage, if not a necessity, to a Malaya deprived of many sources of food by the consequences of the war. The implications of the statement were not clearly understood until Lieutenant-General Sir Harold Briggs was recalled from his retirement in Cyprus and placed in command of military operations against the guerrillas. Then it was realized that there could be no solution of the problem which did not take into account the unprotected squatters, who formed a fifth of the total Chinese population in Malaya and whose submission to the guerrillas might have led, if the guerrillas had possessed any clear objectives, to a *levée en masse* of the Chinese population. By exposing the ineffectiveness of the protecting forces, by sudden raids on police posts, and by prepared ambushes, the guerrillas were showing that under conditions chosen by themselves they held the initiative; but the major condition was the fact that the squatters lived in widely separated areas on the fringe of the jungle. Two things could be done. The squatters could be removed to other areas, or they could be more efficiently protected. The present situation combines both measures: some squatters in areas where the guerrillas clearly have advantages have been removed, and elsewhere a carefully laid net of strong-posts has been erected. The operation can no longer be described as a "police action." It is outright war, with the British employing rocket-firing Beaufighters and flame-throwers, Dakotas flown in from Australia, head-hunting Dyaks from Borneo to act as trackers, and motorized units of Gurkhas and the East Suffolk Regiment.

The military solution was only part of the solution. One of the essential methods of the Briggs plan was to install civil and administrative centers in the villages and settlements near the guerrilla areas. The villages could be protected by barbed wire and by military strong-posts, but there needed also to be a sense of community between the villagers and the administration; in the long run the new civic centers may prove to be more valuable in holding off the guerrillas than military forces are. Given a stake in administration, provided with tangible reasons why they should risk death at the hands of the guerrillas rather than fall in with the guerrillas' wishes,

offered improved communications and better schools, and kept in touch with other village communities through the radio and the *Squatters' News*, they would come to act as a shield against the terrorist violence coming from the forest rather than as an active weapon in the guerrillas' hands. It is to the credit of Sir Harold Briggs that he recognized that social solutions provided more advantages than military ones.

But the war went on. Serious mistakes had been made in the past, and the task of rectifying them was not easy. At a conference held in Kuala Lumpur on July 15, 1949, Sir Alexander Newbould, the chief secretary and acting commissioner of police, said, "The majority of the terrorists now in the jungle would lay down their arms if surrender terms were offered."<sup>1</sup> This information was based on the interrogation of suspects and prisoners, but no surrender terms were offered. Over a long period the Singapore newspapers debated whether body armor should be provided for the soldiers and rubber planters; none was issued. These were important suggestions, for it was known that many, perhaps half of the guerrillas had been impressed and were tired of fighting, while the soldiers and rubber planters needed added protection. Though only about 30 rubber planters had been killed, the lists of casualties had been mounting. The guerrillas had caused 2,018 civilian casualties, including more than 1,000 people killed. In addition police casualties totaled 923, including 449 killed, and British Army casualties totaled 451, including 200 killed in action.<sup>2</sup> At this rate the guerrillas were not getting far, but they were creating slowly, and apparently with very little effort, a wave of fear which was spreading all over Malaya.

If, after Sir Harold Briggs's arrival, the government was coming closer to the people, there was considerable evidence to show that the guerrillas themselves were losing touch with the people. From captured letters it was known that they had hoped to establish a People's Republic, presumably in the form of a dictatorship, by August, 1948, a month after their most ambitious outbreak. They failed. By the end of the year one of their number wrote:

<sup>1</sup> *Singapore Sunday Times*, July 17, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 27, 1950. These figures, of course, include casualties both before and after the arrival of Sir Harold Briggs.

The initial fighting spirit of the executives has been reduced to hopelessness, knowing not what to do next. The confidence of the people in the victory of the Malayan Revolution has turned to depend on victory in the Chinese Revolution and the outbreak of the third world war. Many other insoluble difficulties present themselves to us.<sup>3</sup>

In another letter, which to some extent explains the first, a guerrilla wrote:

The leaders feel sorry about their own poor education, but they despise educated people and refuse to learn. They are even too lazy to read the newspapers. We have been unable to understand the situation as a whole and unable to obtain correct information about our enemies.<sup>4</sup>

But if correct information was no longer obtainable, it could only be owing to the fact that the squatters were no longer the willing tools of the guerrillas, either because they had been alienated by the excesses of the guerrillas or because the government was fulfilling its function of bringing the squatters within the community.

There were other things that worked in disfavor of the guerrillas. The Kuomintang never learned to fight guerrilla campaigns against the Chinese Communists, but the British were perfectly prepared to fight as guerrillas. By the end of 1949 there were over 150 "jungle squads" within the Federation. These jungle squads were profoundly international. They usually comprised Malays, Sikhs, and Punjabis, all drawn from the regular uniformed police, assisted by Chinese detectives; each squad consisted of six combat sections, each of ten men, under carefully chosen sergeants. At the head of the squad was an Englishman, who had to be prepared to lead his sections into the field. The squad members were given modern automatic weapons, hand grenades, riot guns, and tear gas, and they were also provided with jeeps and bicycles—the ease with which the Japanese had conquered Malaya on bicycles was not forgotten. The guerrilla operations against the guerrillas took the form of planned raids, surprise sweeps, deep jungle patrols, and occasional bitter fighting.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 1950.

<sup>4</sup> *Straits Times*, March 4, 1949, quoted from Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia* (New York, William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1950), p. 156. Copyright, 1950, by The International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations.



What was notable was that the force, composed of so many different nationalities, worked with such unanimity, and it is conceivable that the basis of the new Malaya is being worked out among these strange, heterogeneous groups of antiguerrilla guerrillas.

How far the Chinese guerrillas could go at a time of depression is unknown. While the rubber and tin are internationally in demand,<sup>5</sup> it is unlikely that the Indians, who tap the rubber trees, and the Chinese, who mine the tin and comprise the majority of the comprador class in Singapore, will assent to a revolution. To all except a few the advantages of peace outweigh the advantages of violence. But if a depression occurred in Malaya like the depression in 1932, the situation might be altered overnight. The Chinese guerrilla who thought the victory of the Chinese Communists or a third world war would bring him to power was probably wrong: what would bring him to power would be another collapse of Wall Street.

Though a prolonged and exasperating war is being fought—the Malayan Government still refers to an “emergency” and Sir Harold Briggs is still referred to as “the Director of Operations”—its effect on the social economy of the nation has been negligible. Malaya still rides a wave of prosperity. The output of tin has increased by 60 per cent; 100,000 more children have been registered for schools since July, 1948, and 10,000 new vehicles have been licensed for the roads. The war has even produced positive advantages: dangerous communal differences have decreased. The United Malay National Organization (UMNO), which until recently tended toward an aggressive pro-Malay policy, has begun to open its doors to non-Malays, while the Malayan Chinese Association is beginning to edu-

<sup>5</sup> Strangely enough, the prosperity of Malaya was considerably increased by purchases by the Soviet Union. In January, 1947, a Soviet trade envoy paid a visit to Singapore, remaining in Malaya for eight months, laying the groundwork for purchases which amounted to more than 100,000 tons. The figures of Malayan rubber exports to the Soviet Union during recent years are: 36,790 tons in 1947; 103,393 tons in 1948; 63,414 tons in 1949; 46,747 tons during the first seven months of 1950. The greatest quantity of rubber was bought by the Soviet Union during the year when the Communist guerrillas were attempting to destroy the rubber plantations and being most successful in their operations. There is now a considerable movement, led by Penang exporters and by the influential *Straits Times*, to ban the export of rubber to all Communist territories. Meanwhile Malayan prosperity seems likely to continue for a long period: the price of rubber has doubled since the Korean invasion, more than trebled since the beginning of 1950, and has risen sevenfold since 1947.

cate Chinese in a Malayan loyalty. The question of *Melayu*—the adoption of a purely Malay nationality by the races inhabiting Malaya—has suddenly been pushed to the forefront. How deeply this will affect the development of Malaya is unknown, but there are signs that the Chinese will readily accept Malay nationality if the clause forbidding immigrants to receive their new nationality for eight years after their arrival is reduced to five years; and so far, though the Malays themselves have raised bitter objections, the outlook appears promising. Malaya is an experiment in interracial integration. It is impossible to conceive that the small peninsula will ever be partitioned among the Malays, the Indians, and the Chinese, for their integration is already so close that they would themselves work against partition.

The emergence of revolutionary nationalism in Malaya, as in all the other countries of the Far East, was to be expected; that it should fail was the result of the peculiar ethnographic pattern of the country. This was an important discovery, and it showed that in some cases, at least, the revolution could be canalized into more useful directions. Schools, social security, pensions, and trade unions: all these were problems that demanded settlement, and some of the energy which might have been expended upon revolutionary experiments can now be spent more usefully on social progress. Some hint at the direction now being pursued is given by a statement issued by the Communities Liaison Committee, an unofficial committee of community leaders. The statement discusses the communal problems at length, setting as its aim the achievement of self-government and the creation of a Malayan nationality. It continues:

It would seem that all races are now more liberal in their views and that working in the Federal Council they have discovered how closely linked in reality they are to each other. The very genuine desire for the preservation of Malay life and civilisation that is so abundantly clear among all races of Malaya should surely remove by now most of the fears that existed when the Federation agreement<sup>6</sup> was worked out.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Protectorate of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore came into existence early in 1948, taking the place of the complex colonial administration by which nine sultanates, one colony, and two settlements were administered with varying degrees of efficiency.

<sup>7</sup> *The Listener*, Oct. 20, 1949.

Among the signatures of this statement were Dato Onn bin Jafaar, the *mentri besar*, or prime minister, of the State of Johore, and Dato Tan Cheng-lock, the president of the Malayan Chinese Association, a Straits-born Chinese, who had been injured a few months before by a young Communist who threw a hand grenade at him in Ipoh. They represented two extremes: Dato Onn was an aristocratic Malay who had held office in the State of Johore since 1911 and was an adopted son of the reigning sultan, while Dato Tan Cheng-lock represented the rubber barons of Malacca and the compradors of Singapore. At no other time would it have been conceivable that the Chinese and Malays would have come to such an agreement. Partly the agreement arose as the result of the manifestoes issued by the short-lived Malayan Democratic Union (MDU), which came into existence in December, 1945, and dissolved itself in June, 1948, when the Communist outbreaks began to assume the features of a guerrilla war. The MDU had put forward a program calling for immediate introduction of universal suffrage and demanded dominion status for a government elected by the people. It was not a racial organization, but its members were usually to be found among the Chinese, Indian, and Eurasian middle classes. Their purpose was to work together with the Malays to establish a genuine Malayan citizenship in which all races would stand together on an equal footing. The impetus had come from a young and brilliant lawyer, John Eber, who was interned during the Japanese occupation. He founded the organization, became its vice president, wrote its manifestoes in the intervals of defending Malayan extremists in the courts, and fashioned a blueprint for the new Malaya which has not been notably departed from, even though he was accused of an excessive idealism; he was also accused—the charge is probably irrelevant—of possessing a lawyer's cunning. By July, 1949, the general outlines first published by John Eber toward the end of 1945 were beginning to be seen as the inevitable outlines, and Malayan leaders began preparing a plan for popular elections to present in the Federal Legislative Council. It was a bold political move, providing for proportional racial representation, votes for women, and safeguards against corruption at the ballot box. The plan frankly recognized that the Chinese had an equal stake with the Malays.

The MDU was not the only party which possessed a decisive in-

fluence on the course of events in Malaya. Though a host of parties arose at the end of the war, they gradually crystallized into eight parties, each with their pronounced aims, independent of one another and living in worlds of their own. Sectional nationalism was rampant at the beginning of the peace. The Indonesian immigrants, numbering about ten thousand, formed the API (*Angkatan Pemoeda Insaf*), flew the Indonesian flag, smuggled arms to the Indonesian revolutionaries, and looked forward to an Indonesian empire which would embrace Malaya and New Guinea and all the islands between. They had little effect within Malaya itself, but they influenced Indonesia profoundly, for without the arms smuggled across the Strait of Malacca it is unlikely that the Indonesians would have been able to hold out against the Dutch. There was the UMNO, already referred to, which was supported by the majority of the Malays and the sultans, a party devoted to maintaining the traditional rule of the sultanates and the Malay people's birthright. It was not at any time violently anti-Chinese, for the Malays had come to accept the Chinese, without too much cavil, as necessary evils: its purpose was to keep the nationalism of the Malays in constant ferment. A minority party, the MNP (Malayan Nationalist Party), was avowedly neither Malayan in its origins nor nationalist in its intentions: it was dominated by Communists and was in close touch with the MCP (Malayan Communist Party) and PUTERA (United Malay Front), though these had distinct programs of their own. The MCP had risen on the ashes of the MPAJA, and announced shortly after the end of the war that it would obtain power either through the trade unions or by insurrection. The PUTERA, led by Ahmad Boestaman, a scion of the Perak royal house who had changed his name during the Japanese occupation, when he became one of the most capable administrators assisting the Japanese, followed the program of the Kris Society formed to bring about a purely Malay state, all other nationals in Malaya to be swept out of the country or murdered. Perhaps it was inevitable that the inflammatory nationalism of the Malay extremists should have eventually joined hands with the inflammatory Communism of the recent Chinese immigrants who formed the core of the MCP. The marriage, however, was short-lived, and PUTERA ceased being an effective force after the party was outlawed, though it is known to have gone underground. There

remained the PMCJA (Pan-Malayan Council of Joint Action), originally representing the Chinese merchants and a great body of the Chinese laborers, later to fall under the intellectual domination of the MDU, and the MIC, the Malayan Indian Congress, which remained a nationalist force until Nehru ruled that Indians in Malaya would have to choose between Indian and Malayan citizenship: he had no intention of reviving the ancient Indian Empire which once embraced most of the islands of Southeast Asia, and he refused to allow the Indians to compromise their political action by their possession of a double nationality.

In the complex of political parties that emerged following the war—there were many other splinter parties, the PUTERA, for example, breaking into a number of other parties after having arisen as a conglomeration of thirty-two separate parties—the absence of student leadership was notable. The students had formed the core of the Indonesian revolutionary government; they permeated Viet-Minh; they were regarded among the Chinese Communists as their most potent weapon; and in India they formed the chief obstacle to conservatism within the Congress party. In Malaya they were absent, or nearly absent, simply because there were no colleges except Raffles College in Singapore (which was empowered to give medical degrees only). There was a Malay college at Kuala Kangsar and another in Kuala Lumpur, but they were hardly more than small teacher-training schools. A tradition of scholarship did not exist in Singapore, and it was not until Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders led an educational commission to Malaya in 1948 that any provisions were made for setting up a university. Considering that the Indonesian revolutionary government had set up six universities within the first year of its existence, the lapse on the part of the British seemed to be inexplicable.

The innumerable splinter parties were outnumbered by the innumerable trade unions. According to Ian Morrison, the able and brilliant correspondent of the *Times*, who was later killed in Korea, there were 310 trade unions registered in the Federation at the end of 1948. Of these nearly half were under Communist domination.<sup>8</sup> The proportion has considerably changed since then, but in various ways the Communists still control nearly a quarter of the trade-

<sup>8</sup> *Far Eastern Survey*, Dec. 22, 1948.

union members. Their control is by no means complete. It is often disguised, and it tends to decrease as time passes. Curiously, the trade unions oppose the guerrillas, and it would seem that they have come to realize that direct action is unsuitable in a country as heterogeneous as Malaya. Not from the Chinese Communists but from the Indian Congress have the trade unions derived their strongest weapon—the *hartal*. The strike of February, 1946, will be long remembered, for then, over a period of nearly six weeks, Singapore became a completely unmanageable colony, with no workers reporting to work, while a brooding silence hovered over the teeming city. It is a weapon which may be employed again, and it suggests that the Indian Communists possessed, and may still possess, a more effective program in Malaya than the Chinese Communist immigrants were ever able to devise. Once again militant nationalism of the blindest kind had joined hands with Communism, for the strike was largely brought about by S. A. Ganapathy, the most violent of the Tamil radical leaders, successively a member of Congress, a commander in Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army, a Malayan delegate to the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi, and a fervent Communist. Found in possession of unlicensed firearms, he was executed in May, 1949. The execution was met with protests from India and from many trade-union members in Malaya, but it was considered by the British as an act of inevitable justice. Ganapathy had been president of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, a purely Communist body, and it was he who, at a meeting of the executive committee in March, 1948, had put forward the decision to take up arms, imposing his will on a moderate minority which counseled caution. There had been sporadic guerrilla warfare before: with this decision the war started in earnest. By July the guerrillas had been organized, bases had been established, and the first defenceless squatters had been killed.

That a Tamil Communist should have been responsible for an outbreak of guerrilla warfare, later to be taken up almost entirely by Chinese Communists, was in keeping with the strange, turbulent pattern of Malaya. "The faceless men with guns" who hid in the tall lalang grass, their favorite technique the silent ambush, represented no social solutions to the complex Malayan problems. Stiffened in time with advisers from China, specializing in arson and mutilation,

they were in a position to inflict more casualties than they suffered themselves, but the attrition was slow, and the enormous productivity of Malaya hardly suffered from the loss of a few godowns set on fire. Like the Japanese, they approved of killing Chinese educators, and like the savage tribes of the interior they learned that one is more dangerous when concealed: but this was their only similarity with the Sakai, a gentle people who are called savage only because they refuse to face the complexities of modern civilization. The Communists were outside the mainstream of the Malayan revolution, and this was their more significant failing.

But perhaps here too the Communist uprising was historically useful in forcing the issues. When the outbreak began in July, 1948, the British parliament was assured that all the necessary forces for the maintenance of law and order were available; while as late as September, 1948, an official Army spokesman declared that the War Office had no intention of sending armored vehicles into the battle. Even by the end of the year it was said that the "police action" would be over in two or three months. It was not over. An army of 130,000 men, comprising soldiers, policemen, and "Home Guards," was being contained by guerrillas who were never counted, though they were likely never to have exceeded 5,000 men. The disproportion in numbers did not show that the Communists in Malaya were possessed of a superior ideology: it showed only that a handful of men, without roots in the country, can disrupt a modern complex civilization if they are ruthless enough. In the history of Malaya the Communists filled the role occupied by Darul Islam and the abortive Communist uprisings in Indonesia.

Meanwhile the tension remains. The Malays, who have possessed the land for a thousand years, fear the immigrant Chinese, whose loyalty until recently has been exclusively directed outside Malaya. The Indians, numerically inferior, fear the weight of the Chinese and the Malays, and wonder how long they will be employed on the rubber plantations, since synthetic rubber may one day displace the rubber trees. The Chinese fear the emergence of a Malayan nationalism on a scale hitherto unknown, remembering that it was the Malays who led the Japanese along the jungle paths; while the British, though they pretend successfully to fear nothing at all, remember that two of their greatest battleships have been lost off Malayan

shores, and though they hold the reins for the moment, they are spent in Malaya just as surely as in India or Burma. But in spite of this tangled cross-current of fears, it would appear that *Malayu* holds the key to the problem.

*Malayu* is not, however, universally regarded with favor. General Carlos Romulo stated recently that he regarded *Malayu* as something so artificial that it could have no hope of surviving. He said:

Malaya has even less of the makings of a nation with any chance of prolonged survival than any of the others. This is partly the result of the historic circumstance of its plural population, more or less evenly divided between Malays and Chinese. In Malaya you find a rather pathetic attempt going on to *create* a Malayan nationality, to which the Malays are a little allergic and to which the Chinese are certainly indifferent. You find in Malaya soberer people thinking of the future of the country much more in terms of the ultimate extent of the direct Chinese influence from the north on the one hand, and the possible effect of the Indonesian influence from the south, on the other. A great many people foresee the possibility of the division of the country between the two spheres. The nature of the relationship between them will be determined, I suppose, by whether or not the Indonesian federation by that time is in a hostile, or in a co-operative, relation to China. Either is possible.<sup>9</sup>

The analysis is brilliant, but it leaves out of account one factor of enormous significance to the people who inhabit Malaya. The example of Korea will increasingly tend to make people less enamored of dividing countries into separate orbits, and Malaya herself is too small to be so divided. If, as may well happen, the power of Indonesia and the power of China tend to be roughly equal as they spread out toward the shores of Malaya, Malaya will be ensured of a comparative immunity from them, being in a position of balance between them; and it may well be that in Malaya, India, China, and the vast Unified State of Indonesia will meet peacefully. General Romulo had foreseen, even before World War II, the possibility of a Pan-Malayan league which would include Malaya and the Philippines and everything between. Even then it is conceivable that Malaya will remain on the outskirts of the league.

<sup>9</sup> *South Asia in the World Today*, ed. Phillips Talbot (The University of Chicago Press, 1950), p. 164.



For a little while longer Malaysians will read in their newspapers little paragraphs referring not to the war so much as to the capture of obscure pages of Communist documents deep in the jungles. "A combined military and police party," said the *Straits Sunday Times* on June 3, 1949, "operating in the Sungei Patani area yesterday captured a bandit living in a hut some distance from the main road. The man was unarmed, but several important Communist documents were discovered." It was almost the exemplar of all such reports, as shadowy as the events described. To discover these crumbling documents had cost treasures which might have been spent in social progress. The revolt was useless. However the revolt of Asia developed, there would be no permanent settlement of Chinese Communists in the jungles of Central Malaya. Raffles had dreamed of Malaya, and Singapore especially, as "the emporium and pride of the East," and there was little doubt that the dream would continue to come true in spite of the guerrillas.

## VIII

### VIET-NAM: The Heart of Darkness

The imperial city is called Hué. The Court is most stately, and the number of noblemen and courtiers very great. Their attire is magnificent. The people are extremely good natured, yet they make good soldiers, and I can say in truth, notwithstanding they fight very well in war, without sparing their lives, they love one another as well as if they were brothers, and I have never heard of any soldier using his arms to hurt a comrade.

—ALEXANDRE DE RHODES, *Voyages et Missions*

WHEN Alexandre de Rhodes visited the Annamite Court at Hué in the seventeenth century, many things perplexed him, and most of all he was perplexed by the spectacle of a gentle race which delighted in war. He was impressed by their slender galleys, longer than any he had seen in Genoa or Marseilles, all exquisitely painted, shining in the green reflected light of the hills, and manned by soldiers in decorative costumes. He observed that these galleys had attacked the huge Dutch galleons and put them to flight, and he made a particular note that they were not manned by slaves but by free men. He admired the finely carved capitals and pillars of the palaces, but the villages pleased him as much; and when he returned to Paris to die, he was to retain with him for the rest of his life the vision of the peaceful rice fields, the trumpeting of the heralds, the beauty of that small-boned and graceful people. He left a detailed account of his journey through the countryside, and it is from him that we learn—for there are very few who are able to consult the Annamite annals—that there existed in this small empire a traditional respect for schol-

ars and a civilization which a European might envy. All children were taught free. Men addressed one another as brothers, women addressed one another as sisters, even when they were complete strangers. There was little difference between the classes. The *Si, Nong, Cong, Thuong*—the scholars, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants—were hardly classes: they were different careers which peasants had embarked upon. According to Father de Rhodes, high officers of state worked on their own farms; and though he may have exaggerated the beauty and calm of Annam in the seventeenth century, there is enough other evidence to suggest that these people living among the semitropical jungles had learned a kind of contentment from the ordered ritual they inherited from the Chinese. But he noted that they were fiercely nationalist, and regarded their country as "the most blessed in all the wide earth."

The same qualities which Father de Rhodes observed in the past are still present among the Annamites. They are gentle when left alone and unboundedly ferocious when attacked. American officers stationed in Kunming during the war observed that these small, dark, eager people gave the impression of being too frail to take part in attacks against the Japanese when their country was occupied; later they learned to their surprise that the Japanese only possessed a slender hold on the country, and that the Indochinese were in a perpetual state of revolt. The savagery of the Indochinese against the Japanese was equaled only by their savagery against the French later.

Since the time when the French first landed in Indochina, there had been constant rebellions. Social resentment was continual. Sporadic uprisings, usually beginning in northern Tonkin, were continually being put down, and the more massive uprising in 1930 was only the greatest among many up to that time.

When the war against the Japanese came to an end, the people of Indochina, like the people of Malaya, Burma, and the Philippines, had long since decided that imperialism and colonialism had completed their course. An intense nationalism reigned, and the most famous of the Indochinese revolutionaries was placed at the head of the government. He had been a Communist. He insisted now that he was a nationalist and was prepared to enter in agreement with France for the peaceful transfer of sovereignty; if necessary, Indo-

china would take her place within the French Union. There is no reason to distrust his early appeals to nationalism, or to see them as the disguised outpourings of a man determined to introduce soviet into Indochina. The people desired no connections with any foreign power. The new government assumed power in Saigon and Hanoi, the Emperor Bao Dai abdicated, land reforms were pushed through, and an immense program to combat illiteracy was put into effect. There were signs that under Ho Chih-minh the "reasonable revolution" was about to be accomplished.

Much has been written about Ho Chih-minh, and a great deal of what has been written is uninformed. He has been described as a wispy man, at the mercy of the Communist members of his cabinet, with a pathetic lack of knowledge of military affairs, the perpetual wanderer suddenly caught up in the revolutionary wave which followed the war. Partly, of course, this derives from the picture he has deliberately drawn of himself. With his missing teeth, his long lean face, his sad eyes, his smallness—he is only 4 ft. 11 ins. tall—he resembles the tramp who appears in so many Oriental dramas, a curious combination of intellectual and clown. But it should be remembered that, like Mao Tse-tung, he possesses an intellectual eminence rare at any time. It is not only that he writes and talks well in eight or nine languages, or that he has a vast knowledge of the theory of guerrilla warfare, or that he possesses reserves of strength which will have to be respected by all those who oppose his government, but there is a toughness about his mind which speaks of long years of lonely study and of desperate stratagems, of perpetual conflict with authority. Quietly, purposefully, for thirty years he has been attempting to throw the French out of Indochina. Sometimes power has slipped from him. He attempted to weld the Communist party of Indochina together from a base in Hong Kong; the attempt failed. He tried again from Singapore; he failed again. He became an adviser to Borodin in the days when Borodin ruled supreme in Canton, and when Borodin failed, Ho Chih-minh also acquired the marks of failure; but all these failures led to a knowledge of revolutionary action which he would never have possessed if he had been uniformly successful. Like Mao Tse-tung, he has learned more from his failures than he ever learned from his successes. There are rumors that he is at least partly Chinese. His mind moves along

Chinese ways; he talks many dialects of Chinese perfectly; even the bone structure of his face suggests a native of Kiangsi. His poetry, though based on classical models, is less astringent than Mao Tse-tung's. He is not moved by great images, and there are no sharp jabbing phrases, no celebrations of imperial splendor. He writes quietly, limpidly, with no straining after effect, with a complete command of his medium. At first sight his poetry, written in Chinese, suggests casual poetic offerings written at moments of leisure, but they possess sharp overtones apparent to those who know modern Chinese poetry well.

Since we know men best by their poetry, and since Ho Chih-minh will occupy an increasingly important place in the future of Asia, it is worth while to examine his poems carefully. Here are two poems he dedicated to the speaker of the Viet-Nam National Assembly:

*The Autumn Flute*

Planning the campaign deep into the night,  
I stretch myself into a pool of leisure.  
The autumn wind outside and the autumn rain  
bring with them the autumn's chill.  
Suddenly I hear the autumn's flute sounding  
coldly like a signal on the screened hillside.  
The patrol returns,  
and warm still is the awaiting wine!

*The Straining Horses*

Reading . . . a mountain bird alights on my windowsill,  
In my inkstone I see reflected a spray of spring!  
As reports of the campaign's successes  
Crowd in with straining horses,  
Thinking of you and touched by this living scene of strange beauty,  
I am moved to present you with this freshly attempted poem.<sup>1</sup>

We shall never know what particular moment of the fighting in Indochina he was referring to, and indeed he seems to be attempting to describe in *The Autumn Flute* the impatient moment at dawn when all army commanders await the news of a reconnaissance, try-

<sup>1</sup> *Asian Horizon*, Autumn-Winter, 1949-1950, p. 38. The poems are translated by K. H. C. Lo. For convenience I have added the titles.

ing in a single poem to convey a permanent state of awaiting. The poem is original and the images are freshly seen, for the signal on the screened hillside belongs to his own time, but the poem has a legitimate ancestry. Like the famous Chinese poet Tu Fu, Ho Chih-minh writes poetry with a hard core surrounded by flesh, and there are echoes in *The Autumn Flute* of one of Tu Fu's most famous poems:

*The Jade Flower Palace*

Where the streams wind and the wood is always sighing,  
 Hoary grey mice scurry among abandoned roof-tiles.  
 No one knows the name of the prince who once owned this house,  
 Standing there even now under the hanging cliffs.  
 In dark rooms ghost-green flowers are shining.  
 Beside the ancient battered road a melancholy stream flows downhill.  
*Then, from the flutes of the forest, come a thousand voices,*  
*The colors of autumn are fresh in the wind and the rain,*  
 Though the virgins have all gone their way to the yellow graves.  
 Why do the paintings still hang on the walls?  
 The charioteers in gold chariots—all have gone.  
 There remain of those ancient days only the stone horses.  
 Sorrow comes and sits in the spreading grass:  
 All the while singing, I am overwhelmed with lamentation.  
 Among those lanes of life disappearing in the distance,  
 Who can make himself eternal?

A Chinese, reading Ho Chih-minh's *The Autumn Flute*, would be made instantly aware of the lines in *The Jade Flower Palace*, and at the same time he would be aware of the famous lines written by the woman poet Chiu Chin, who wrote on the eve of her execution in 1907:

The autumn wind and the autumn rain  
 Mortally torment a man.

These were lines which belonged to revolutionary history, for Chiu Chin had attempted to murder the Manchu Viceroy of Anhwei, and after a brief trial she was decapitated with a heavy sword. She had made no attempt to run away. Ho Chih-minh has simply taken her line and to it added echoes of Tu Fu's poem; like Mao Tse-tung, he has revealed himself as a traditionalist, deriving his strength from

the past. What is strange is that two great political leaders should possess the same talent for poetry and write their poetry in ways which they publicly condemn, for both of them have insisted that the revolutionary times demand a revolutionary poetry. What is perhaps stranger is that both of them should be such accomplished poets and such accomplished borrowers from the poetry of the past.

Even from his poetry it should be possible to discern the validity of the man's judgments. Nearly always they have been right. When in December, 1946, Léon Blum, then about to become premier of France, announced in *Le Populaire* that the problem of Indochina was not one susceptible to force, Ho Chih-minh observed quietly, "A man will often say as a private citizen what he would not do as premier of France."<sup>2</sup> A week later the uneasy truce between the French occupying force and the Viet-Minh came to an end when French soldiers began to remove the barricades erected in Hanoi. From that moment, though there have been occasional intervals of peace, the war between the Viet-Minh and the French has been continuous.

Until recently there has been little evidence that Ho Chih-minh regarded himself as a Communist. As late as December, 1946, Jean Sainteny, the commissioner for Annam and Tonkin, said he regarded Hi Chih-minh as a sincere patriot. It is possible, and even probable, that Ho Chih-minh now regards himself as a Communist. There are reasons for the change. The accord of March 6, 1946, was never implemented by the French, and the war was unusually bloody even for a country where rebellion had always been remarkably bloody. The French could not stop the war for reasons of prestige, and Viet-Minh could not stop fighting until the French had either accepted the full terms of the accord which they had solemnly signed or withdrawn from Indochina. There were other reasons which made the Viet-Minh organization increasingly turn toward Communist solutions. By the end of 1947 the Chinese Communists were beginning to demonstrate that they possessed the power to conquer China, and during this year the first contracts were made between the Chinese Communists and Viet-Minh. Hatred against the French was visibly increasing, and just as Mao Tse-tung's fury against

<sup>2</sup> Foster Hailey, *Half of One World* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 103. Copyright, 1950, by Foster Hailey.

Chiang Kai-shek was sensibly increased by the murder of his wife by the Generalissimo's orders, so the fury of Vo Nguyen Giap, the young lawyer who became commander in chief of the Viet-Minh forces, increased when his wife was murdered in a French prison. Almost inevitably, thrown upon their own resources, the Viet-Minh revolutionaries found themselves confronted with a situation in which their only allies were the Chinese Communists.

There are three ways in which Communism can penetrate Asia: by war, by rebellion, and by peaceful penetration. The rebellion of Viet-Minh is the classical example of penetration by rebellion, a rebellion so vast and so prolonged that it assumes something of the characteristics of a permanent *levée en masse*. From the day in September, 1945, when Ho Chih-minh announced in Hanoi that "Viet-Nam has the right to be free and independent, and in fact has become independent," Viet-Minh has been a government operating in defiance of the French military government or whatever governments the French have imposed, possessing to a quite extraordinary degree the power to enact its own laws, maintain an army and a police force, collect taxes, and send plenipotentiaries to foreign powers. And it is necessary to inquire why it has been so astonishingly successful.

There are many reasons, and not the least of them are concerned with the colonial attitudes of the French, who combined in nearly all their colonial governments a relentless logic and an endless corruption. The logic of French colonial policy demanded that the colonists should serve their term in Indochina with the minimum of hardship. Far more than the British or the Dutch, they regarded themselves as the *Herrenvolk* abroad, and were prepared to employ all means to perpetuate their power without assuming the responsibilities of power. They made no efforts to raise the general level of education of the peasants. They offered the peasants no inducements to remain attached to the French. The proud traditions of the Annamese were destroyed, and no other traditions were acquired in their place. The ancient democratic tradition by which the children of peasants and artisans studied side by side with the children of mandarins gave place to a pathetic and incoherent program of education by which hardly more than a handful of students ever attended school: and in all colonial history there are hardly any more damaging figures



than those published by the Government-General of Indochina in the *Annuaire statistique de l'Indo-Chine* in 1943, where the general expenditures are stated to be:

For schools . . . . .	748,000 piastres
For hospitals . . . . .	71,000 piastres
For libraries . . . . .	30,000 piastres
For purchase of opium by the State monopoly . . . . .	4,473,000 piastres

It is true that these figures represent expenditures when the French colonial government was itself subservient to the Japanese colonial government, but they represent a trend which was already in operation during the last years of peace before World War II. If Viet-Minh is never tired of pointing to these figures, the responsibility for maladministration lies heavily on the French, who have never been able to devise excuses for their behavior. Ignorant and resourceful, delighting in the splendor and tropical luxuriance of the colony, and in the apparent gentleness and passivity of the people, they assumed that their empire could be perpetuated with a minimum of expenditure for social needs and a maximum taxation. In this they were wrong. The bitterness of the present conflict in Indochina is a measure of the inadequacy of their colonial administration in the past, and the fact that they have not noticeably changed their policy in 1950 is a measure of their determination to embrace destruction. That the destruction of French power in Indochina may involve the destruction of all Western influence in Southeast Asia has, of course, occurred to them, but on the only levels in which Western influence can penetrate effectively they have done relatively nothing: they continue to address elderly Indochinese as *tu*, as though they were children; they have not reduced taxes; they have not built more schools; they have not introduced measures to reduce the appalling incidence of malaria, trachoma, and amoebic dysentery; and they have never dared to arm the Indochinese, but have preferred to use French conscripts and German mercenaries. They had many opportunities to build up a state which would have merited the alliance of the Indochinese. They failed because they continued in revolutionary times to administer as though they were conquerors. Without the elasticity and the generosity of the British, incapable of seeing the necessity of withdrawal on the

military front and advance on the social front, their rigid logic has threatened them with strangulation; and at this late stage in the game nearly all their military actions work in favor of Viet-Minh.

The catastrophic position of the French military government is not in the least necessary, nor is it demanded by the logic of history. There are no advantages in attempting to perpetuate a rigid colonialism. When Lieutenant-General Sir Philip Christison landed at Batavia at the head of the British forces, he said, "We have not come to give this country back to the Dutch." When General Leclerc landed at the airdrome at Saigon not long after his superb drive on Paris, he said, "We have come to reclaim our inheritance." The error lay precisely there. The inheritance belonged rightfully to the Indochinese themselves, and there is no reason to believe that an agreement could have been made between the French Republic and Viet-Minh in 1946 by which the French could have retained in the hearts of the Viet-Nameese the same kind of affection which is reserved, for example, in Burma for the British. It is on the plane of the affections that ultimate political decisions are made in Asia; and to destroy all possible affection for the conquerors has been the particular achievement of the French in Indochina.

What were the root causes? There were, of course, many causes, but the most dangerous was the contempt in which the French held the Indochinese peasant. Regarded as a small, graceful, and handsome beast of burden, he could hardly act otherwise than he did. That he had possessed a fine culture derived from medieval China before the French ruthlessly exterminated it may not have seemed a fact of grave importance; it was, however, a fact remembered bitterly by Ho Chih-minh, whose father was a minor official distantly related to the Emperor Duy-Thanh, and who learned Chinese before he learned to speak Annamite, possessing from the very beginning a respect for Chinese culture which was shared by innumerable descendants of the great mandarin families. They would remind themselves that at a time when in France Louis X practiced absolutism and hanged his own ministers, the *Duc Hoang De* (august and saintly emperor) of Annam followed the traditional Chinese custom of obeying the demands of the eight censors, knowing that the Mandate of Heaven would be removed from him if he acted without deferring to the wishes of the people: there was always the possibility

that the censors might utter the remonstrance, "How could Heaven give His benediction to a realm whose prince is not virtuous?" The prince was rarely as virtuous as Confucian ethics demanded, but at least there was a standard to which he could repair. The French who sailed up the Mekong River in 1858, determined to obliterate by the conquest of Indochina the disgrace they had suffered in their failure to conquer Mexico, possessed no standards except those of a barbarous imperialism determined upon a cheap victory. But the victory was not cheap: Indochina was not pacified until 1908; and there are many Viet-Nameese now living who can remember the time when a shadow government of the descendants of royal princes ruled in northern Annam as though the French conquest had not taken place. There is a sense in which the present war is a continuation of the war fought by the princes of Annam against French power; indeed, the kind of authority wielded by Ho Chih-minh, who is popularly known as Great Uncle Ho as the emperor was known as Great Father, and the kind of guerrilla warfare which is being practiced have remarkable similarities with the prolonged war fought over a period of fifty years between the French and their enemies. What is certain is that the Viet-Nameese have never acquiesced to defeat, and do not contemplate defeat in the future. "We have established a secure state in the mountains and the rivers," declared Ho Chih-minh in 1946, "and though there may be temporary alterations in our boundaries, we do not believe that external forces can obliterate us."

All the advantages in terms of terrain and released psychological forces are on the side of Viet-Minh. If they can endure—and there is hardly anything that prevents them from enduring—the French must gradually lose ground, and by a slow, exasperating, and bloody process of seepage the power they once planted in Indochina must gradually wither away. The experience of China would seem to show that even if the French could muster an army ten times larger than the army they possess, they could not resist the dynamic of Viet-Minh. "There can be no military solution for Viet-Nam," declared General Leclerc early in 1947. "They must be taught a lesson they will never forget," declared General Carpentier, Leclerc's successor, in 1949. "Military aid will be the best economic aid for Viet Nam. . . . Crisis and poverty are the result of insecurity," declared

the French High Commissioner Léon Pignon to a representative of *Time* magazine in April, 1950. But it is precisely military aid which is least advantageous to the French military government. What is needed, on a scale never hitherto envisaged, is social aid, for military aid provides no economic assistance, and the crisis and poverty of Indochina are the result of decades of an almost insane administration.

Even the methods by which the French have attempted to put out the raging fire suggest desperate remedies given too late, and without much faith in their remedial action. The French have applied the methods employed by General von Falkenhausen and by Chiang Kai-shek during the famous five "annihilation campaigns" against the Chinese Communists in 1931-1934. They have burned down and entirely destroyed villages known to be occupied by Viet-Minh forces; they have murdered captives, poisoned wells, attempted to establish *cordons sanitaires*, erected plaster and bamboo watch-towers, and introduced what the Chinese Communists called the "creeping wall" or the "fiery wall," by which armed and fortified posts have been moved up gradually after the intervening ground has been laid waste; but all these methods have only embittered the peasants and made them more determined than ever to destroy French power. The "fiery wall" was successful in the autumn of 1933 in the Kiangsi hills: the Chinese Communists were compelled to break through the lines and begin the Long March which took them to the borders of Tibet. But there is no reason to believe that it can be successful in Indochina, where the jungles and marshes offer an entirely different terrain altogether, where the possibilities of ambush and withdrawal are greater, and where the Viet-Minh peasants operate within interior lines. In this kind of war the advances of French-officered columns can never be more than temporary. They hold what they hold by so slight a margin that a fallen tree can cut them off from reinforcements, and at any moment, from the green depths of the surrounding forests, they must expect a sudden overwhelming attack. Viet-Minh forces have been ordered to attack only when they possess an overwhelming superiority in numbers. In this they follow the doctrine announced by Mao Tse-tung in *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary Wars*. They have also been ordered never to allow their weapons to fall into enemy hands,

with the result that a wounded and dying guerrilla will attempt to scatter the parts of his revolver even when he is running away to die in a corner of the forest. They have been taught that there is often more advantage to be gained in capturing enemy weapons than in killing enemy soldiers, and at least a third of their weapons have been captured from the French, while some of the antiaircraft guns employed by them to shoot down P-63 Kingcobras were captured from the American supplies given to the Kuomintang and seized by the Chinese Communists. *The possibility arises that increased American aid to the French military government will only increase the effectiveness of Viet-Minh forces.* Bombers are not effective when the enemy is concealed in deep forests, nor are tanks likely to have more than a restricted use along jungle trails, though they may be used, as they have been used by both sides in Korea, as movable strong points. The guerrilla war in Indochina remains essentially a small-arms war, with dynamite, machine guns, and hand grenades as the most effective weapons.

The Viet-Minh guerrillas possess advantages which were denied to the Chinese Communists or the Hukbalahaps. Unlike the Chinese Communists during the period 1921-1933, they have not been plagued with internal dissensions of a marked character. The Chinese Communists had no generally acknowledged leader until the Tsunyi Conference in January, 1934, while Ho Chih-minh has maintained his preeminence throughout the whole course of the revolutionary conflict. The Chinese Communists also lacked a long tradition of revolutionary activity; they were compelled to invent their own traditions and their own legends. The Viet-Minh found traditions and legends all around them, in the stories of the guerrilla leaders of a previous generation. With them, also, the marriage between nationalism and revolutionary fervor is particularly close. They are adepts at concealment, and in this they have shown themselves superior to the Chinese Communists, who characteristically vaunted their strength and made little effort to conceal their intentions. All the subtleties of guerrilla fighting, described at length by Mao Tse-tung and elaborated during the war against the Kuomintang and during the war in Korea, are at their fingertips; their textbooks, captured by the French, show a knowledge of guerrilla fighting which owes much to the Chinese Communists but more to their own resourcefulness.

The logic of French colonial policy demanded that military power should be wholly in the hands of the French. It is almost certainly too late for an effective military solution of the revolutionary war, for it is axiomatic that there can be no solution until French forces can be replaced by an army composed of Indochinese, and there is no indication that the French contemplate the formation of such an army on any large-scale basis. A program for producing Indochinese officers began at the end of 1948, but only 200 officers have so far been trained.<sup>3</sup> It is doubtful whether their loyalty to the Bao Dai government can be seriously maintained. Problems of loyalty encompass the French in all directions. Desertions have been frequent. A considerable number of Germans, Moroccans, and even Senegalese, traditionally loyal to France, have joined Viet-Minh forces, the Germans as technicians and the Africans as irregulars. The Bao Dai Government claims to have an army strength of 50,000 men, but half of these possess separate loyalties. They include Cao Daists,<sup>4</sup> the followers of a strange religion which proclaims itself a synthesis of all religions; Hao Haos, who preach an eccentric form of Buddhism, and Roman Catholics, and under no conditions can these form an integrated group. Tens of thousands of partisans and self-defense fighters have been recruited and armed with light weapons, but these too are "material for desertion"; and the almost total absence of officers and noncommissioned officers to train the partisans, and their own lukewarmness in combat, combined with the typical desire of peasants caught between two fires to trade with both sides until they can see which side will win, have made them often a liability to the French Union. The unencouraging result is that the foreign legionaries tend to assume increasingly high positions within

<sup>3</sup> *New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1950.

<sup>4</sup> Cao Daists, who claim to number 2,500,000, mostly in South Viet-Nam, are the disciples of a strange religion founded in 1926 by Ho Phap, who is regarded as a saint and receives all the tribute normally received by the founder of a religion. He lives in a palace and possesses a guard of 20,000 men; some battalions of these also guard Bao Dai. Fanatic and rigidly disciplined, the Cao Daist army, though small, is a singularly efficient fighting force, and at one period, during the split among the Communists in Cochin China, they invaded and occupied large areas in the south. The Cao Daists worship, among others, Jesus Christ, Marcus Aurelius, Joan of Arc, Thomas Jefferson, and Victor Hugo, and believe indiscriminately in Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Confucianism and spiritualism. The holy city of the Cao Daists is in Longthan.

the colonial army. Possessing no interest in social problems, moved by a rigid, machinelike sense of duty to the fact of war rather than to the French Union, they are probably the most dangerous instruments of self-destruction ever employed by the French, and they have left a trail of horror over Indochina which will not be forgotten for many generations.

One other factor weighs heavily on the French. The mere cost of the war is effectively slowing down the expansion of their colonial levies. It has been estimated that the campaign now costs the French taxpayer an amount almost exactly equivalent to the sum available for reconstruction investment in France under the counterpart provisions of Marshall Aid, or roughly \$640,000,000, corresponding to 10 per cent of the national budget. If this were all, it might be considered purely as bookkeeping, but it is not all. Complete French military and civilian casualties have never been published, but they would appear to be about 24,000, and this figure excludes the casualties among legionaries who are foreign-born and those among the partisans and self-defense corps.<sup>5</sup> Even if these were the only losses, they might be regarded by some with equanimity. But the dangers lie deeper: they lie in the continuing corruption of the administration, which has led to political scandals in high quarters; the odor of decay arising from the prolonged practice of one kind of obsolete administration when another kind of administration altogether is needed, the deepening sense of futility among the French, who openly describe the war as *la sale guerre*, and the almost total lack of any dynamic except that possessed by a machine gun. From the humid jungles and paddy fields of Indochina there is wafted to France the smell of gangrene; and there seems at this late date nothing that the French can do to inject vitality into the decaying corpse of their empire in Indochina. They have been defeated on moral and psychological battlefields; they have not even attempted to wage war on social battlefields; they have only just held their foothold on the physical battlefields; and in the political battle—the most dangerous and exhausting of all—they have offered huge hos-

<sup>5</sup> M. Coste-Floret, minister for overseas France, told the French Assembly in March, 1949, that 14,128 soldiers had died in Indochina between Sept. 23, 1948, and Dec. 31, 1948. This figure takes no account of civilian losses and does not differentiate between legionaries and French conscripts, and there seems to be no reason for taking the figure at its face value.

tages to fortune, for they have engaged in a battle they cannot win singlehanded, and militarily they have left themselves open to defeat in metropolitan France, without enough soldiers to withstand another invasion.

The great colonizers have taken risks, even the risk which occurs when they cease being colonizers and surrender the occupied country to its former owners. The British in India and Burma showed themselves possessed of an acute sense of responsibility when they left those countries freely rather than waited until the day when they would be thrown out. They believed, rightly, that relations between Western and Asiatic powers could no longer be maintained on an imperial basis, and that a vast legacy of trust might conceivably follow if they quietly relinquished their rôle as conquerors. The French did not trust the Indochinese. They have consistently refused to arm the villagers, and they have made no real efforts to discover under what conditions the peasants could be brought over to their side, though such conditions could have been discovered. Their age-old preoccupation with fortresses, their traditional fear of treachery, their conception of themselves as the civilizers of the Orient, though in fact they have failed to bring civilization to the Orient: all these allowed them to decide upon a policy hopelessly inadequate to the times.

The measure of their distrust of the Indochinese could be almost exactly calculated from the March 8, 1949, agreement with Bao Dai. Reluctantly, and against the advice of many of his closest advisers, the former emperor of Annam agreed to become the provisional chief of a new state to be called Viet-Nam. The only brilliant feature of the agreement was that the French had borrowed the name of the state employed by the Viet-Minh revolutionaries. The agreement professed to give self-rule within the framework of the French Union, but the French retained direction of Viet-Nam's diplomacy and national defense; they secured the right to military bases and continued to supply the new government with their own advisers. Viet-Nam was to be federated to Cambodia and Laos with a common currency tied to the franc. No official assurance was given that the agreement would bring Viet-Nam to closer attainment of full independence, nor was there any tentative timetable set up for the withdrawal of French troops from the country. The military govern-



ment remained in power, possessing and exerting exactly the same authority which it had possessed continually since its inauguration. The ministries of foreign trade and customs are held in French hands; the Banque de l'Indochine still issues currency; and the nominal transfer of several government departments has not prevented the Indochinese from regarding them as purely illusory, with the added danger that two bureaucracies now exist where there was only one before. The agreement also included exactly the same kind of concessions which had for so long infuriated the Chinese: Frenchmen were to be considered as people apart, to be tried in penal and civil courts according to French law, by French judges, and according to French legal practice. Even the language of Indochina was suspect, for "a privileged place must be maintained for the French language, which is to be regarded as the diplomatic language of Viet-Nam." Finally, the French were empowered to approve or disapprove of the chiefs of the diplomatic missions sent abroad by the Viet-Nam Government. Such an agreement precluded any real hope of independence: it was an agreement to colonize and be colonized. Bao Dai's reported remark, "I sign this under pressure, and in the hope of a better agreement soon," suggests the possibility that he was compelled to sign under threats of violence.

The unsatisfactory nature of the agreement, which included no social program or any offer of social aid, was hardly calculated to attract the intellectual youth of Indochina, who might have considered a crusade against Communism, or at least a crusade against the extremists of Viet-Minh, for it was becoming increasingly clear as a result of the Chinese Communist victory that Viet-Minh might find itself subservient to Chinese interests. The agreement could have no appeal for the peasants, who were left out of account. The only people it satisfied were some of the court officials and many of the merchants, who could regard the document as an official benediction upon the *status quo*. A military government would rule, but the edicts would be signed by an emperor who possessed no social sense and no understanding of the forces at work, content to hunt and to assemble a retinue of mistresses, impervious to the needs of his countrymen, so powerless that he could answer French demands only by discreet innuendos, as when on June 14, 1949, on the day of his formal installation as emperor, he paid an odd tribute to Viet-

Minh guerrillas when he declared that the new status of the country had been "obtained as a result of the heroism of the entire population of my country." If this was a guarded attempt to communicate with the guerrillas, the young emperor was soon to realize his failure, for immediately after his installation he was condemned to death *in absentia*, by a tribunal composed of Viet-Minh judges, for high treason to the Republic to which he had sworn allegiance in 1945. There is every reason to believe that the sentence will be carried out.

The chief obstacle to any progress of Western influence in Indochina remains the extraordinary agreement of March 8, 1949, by which the powers of the French were confirmed and an elaborate bureaucracy was made even more elaborate by a fictitious transfer of powers.

If a new and more adventurous treaty could be put into force, giving full independence to the Viet-Nam, Cambodian, and Laotian people, with their armies under the temporary command of Western generals, but with all the ministries under the control of the Indochinese, it is still possible that Indochina might become a socialist rather than a Communist state. If the French insist on the terms of the agreement, their adventure in Indochina is evidently doomed; and nothing that is done now can possibly retrieve the situation. Nationalism is a deep and universal force in Asia, and to the Asiatics the grant of a fictitious independence will always be more insulting than no grant at all. If the unfair treaties are allowed to continue, irremediable harm will have been done. The bitterness, the unrestrained intolerance of the Indochinese against an intolerant agreement, the sense of an injustice sustained against all reason, the knowledge that the French have no intention of surrendering their power—these are psychological factors which must be taken into consideration, for it is these factors which will determine the course of the war. No amount of American aid, even if it was purely social aid, can eradicate the distrust which must inevitably ensue if the agreement is carried out to its logical conclusions. Even those Indochinese who regard the French with some favor feel that the agreement was essentially treacherous. Their interests were not consulted. The French have apparently succeeded in gaining power to the detriment of the Indochinese; in effect, they have lost real power,

which must inevitably pass into the hands of the Indochinese themselves, if only because the agreement represents a politically unstable element. It is not pleasant to contemplate the revenge which the Indochinese will take if the French are ever within the orbit of their power.

Meanwhile the battle is being fought over a hundred fronts. Over two large areas in the north and east, and five or six smaller areas clustered round the Mekong River delta, Viet-Minh has complete control. Large areas of Cambodia are in dispute. Saigon, Hué, Dalat, Pnompenh, and Hanoi are almost completely surrounded by areas where the guerrillas either possess complete superiority or contest every inch of the ground. Significantly enough, in the regions bordering on northern Thailand, where the Viet-Minh possesses direct contact with the province of Yunnan, they are gaining in numbers and establishing small independent nuclei in radio contact with Ho Chih-minh's government in the mountains north of Hanoi. Inevitably the redoubt created by the French in the quadrilateral area bounded by Moncay, Langson, Haiphong, and Hanoi must suffer increasing pressures, which may become intolerable in a very short period of time, for these are the areas closest to the Chinese border. It is possible that the whole of northern Indochina will fall as a result of the increased fire power of Viet-Minh now that its soldiers are receiving training in Kwangsi and Yunnan, and American equipment is being handed over to them. The Viet-Minh are perfectly conscious that their hold on the south is considerably less than their hold on the north, and recently they have concentrated their raids on Cochin China, where control of the river channels could give them the same kind of dominating position which the Karens at one time possessed when they controlled the channels of the Irrawaddy delta with a fleet of motorboats. In the deltas a river war is being fought as intense and unrelenting as the guerrilla campaign on land.

If the Viet-Minh forces have been unable to seize any major cities, and have lost heavily in men and equipment, though probably not so heavily as the forces under the command of the French, their advantages remain, and like the Chinese Communists they can regard the fact that the enemy occupies the cities as an asset, for a considerable portion of the enemy's energy is exhausted in maintaining the semblance of power over these cities. Direct contact

between Ho Chih-minh's government and the French-occupied cities continues, and the strikes which were set off during the visit of the American naval squadron in March, 1950, to Saigon were ordered by the Viet-Minh government, though it is conceivable that they would have taken place even without these commands received by radio. The time for shows of naval force in the Far East is long since over. The Asiatics are no longer impressed by shows of force, and it is even doubtful whether force of any kind can change in any significant way the evolution of these new, emergent states.

What, then, should be done? One thing is quite clear: the sending of arms to Indochina to aid the French garrisons without a complete revision of the agreement of March 8, 1949, is a counsel of despair, for the arms cannot be put to effective use unless there is a close understanding between the government and the peasant partisans who fight on the side of the French. What is needed, far more than armaments, is the expansion of the social arm of America until it reaches the villages of Asia. It is not enough that there should be American information centers in the large towns, though such centers have been opened in Hanoi, Saigon, and Vientiane, the capital of Laos. What is far more necessary is that there should be in America an understanding of the forces which move the Indochinese peasants, and a real understanding of their demands, and the kind of government which they, rather than the French, are prepared to accept. It will have to be a government in which the peasants are represented on the highest levels. The danger lies in the possibility that the French, once in possession of American arms, will be even less inclined to listen to the legitimate claims of the peasants; it is significant that it was only when they were assured of American guns in a continuous stream that Bao Dai's government introduced extraordinary powers providing for automatic capital punishment in cases of sabotage. The law allowed the premier, Thanh Van Huu, to take powers by decree "to allow him to act rapidly and effectively against terrorists, saboteurs, and their accomplices." These new measures allowed the government to set up special courts empowered to try and execute terrorists within forty-eight hours, but the word "terrorist" could be extended to include anyone accused by an informer of participating in, or collaborating with, Viet-Minh. In effect, these measures, which were devised by a special ministerial

commission working in secret to avoid assassination attempts, deprived the Indochinese of any vestige of habeas corpus. It was significant that the French waited five years before they gave informers these high and dangerous powers: the law was signed by Bao Dai as chief of state as late as June 8, 1950. Henceforward any accused political prisoner could be imprisoned without trial for an indefinite period, or he could be shot after no more than a cursory examination.

It is unlikely that the rigidity of the French military government will lessen with the arrival of American military and economic aid. Many politically conscious Indochinese have seen in the increasing influence of America in their affairs a hope of a greater independence. The French themselves have accepted American aid only because the drain on their own resources has been such as to strangle their advance, and they have demonstrated a kind of casual, secretive bitterness in the way in which they have been compelled to seek help from others. They point out that they do not do this of their own choosing, and they refuse to accept advice on how to deal with the Indochinese peasant, saying that they have had nearly a hundred years of experience in Indochina, whereas American advisers have been present on the scene for only a few weeks.

The crucial peril, therefore, does not lie in the intentions of Mao Tse-tung or in the physical power of Viet-Minh. It lies in the absence of any real intention to create a social revolution in the south. As long as merchants in Saigon and Hanoi can make vast fortunes, as long as the government encourages the smoking of opium by making opium a state monopoly, as long as the casinos flourish, as long as the peasants are unrepresented in an authoritarian government, there can be no hope of a social revolution under French auspices; and as long as Viet-Minh alone carries through the social revolution in the territory where it operates, the success of Viet-Minh is assured.

There are obvious similarities between the situation in Indochina and the situation in Korea up to June 24, 1950. In both countries a consistent agrarian reform had been carried out in the northern areas under the leadership of men who had been trained over a long period of years in guerrilla fighting. In both countries Communism had emerged from under a mask of nationalism. In both countries the people had suffered the intense strains of colonization. In both countries there had been a general belief among the peasants that

independence would be granted at the end of the war. In both countries the people were intensely proud of their heritage from the past. There the similarities end. The invasion of northern Korea was the result of a deliberate policy clearly approved by Moscow: the rebellion of Viet-Minh had its roots in the people themselves.

Korea and Indochina should not be considered separately. They form the two protective wings of the Chinese Empire: and it is because they have both been enormously influenced by Chinese history, and paid tribute to the Chinese emperor in the past, that the Chinese Communists are certain to approve of the actions of the men we regard as rebels. There is no reason to disbelieve the reports that the Chinese Communists are massing troops on the northern frontiers of Annam and Tonkin, or that there exist vast training camps along these frontiers. Russian advisers have been known to have crossed the border and discussed the military situation with Viet-Minh generals. Nor is there any reason to believe that Russian tanks will not take part in the inevitable attacks on Hanoi, though they can hardly be expected to be so numerous as the tanks which appeared in Korea, if only because of the immense difficulties of transporting them across the whole length of China, nor can they be used as effectively. It is reasonably certain that the next Communist thrust will take the form of an attempt to isolate the French redoubt in Tonkin, already surrounded, its sea lanes menaced by the presence of Communist Hainan directly facing it.

Viet-Minh has fought its guerrilla war with astonishing success, but it faces a period of considerable danger. As long as it fought for itself, elaborating its own social philosophy, developing according to its own social laws, assenting to the demand of the peasants for land, it could hardly fail. The classic phrase of Mao Tse-tung, which General Choy Yong Kun had quoted in his speech of February, 1950, applied: "History shows that no army which is boycotted by the people and completely isolated from the people has ever won a victory, nor will it win a victory in the future." As long as Viet-Minh based its strength on its own people, it went forward. Basing its strength even in part on Russian advisers or on weapons delivered by the Chinese Communists could conceivably prove dangerous. There were indications, too, that the strategy of guerrilla warfare was being exchanged in some places for a strategy of "terrorism on

a broad front." "Volunteers of death" infiltrating into cities, armed with hand grenades and small arms, could conceivably destroy the sources of French power, but they were unlikely to succeed—even regular Viet-Minh units have failed to capture French citadels. On September 18, 1950, a hundred terrorists made their way into Saigon with orders to assemble in small groups in the center of the city and then rush the arsenal. By the evening all these terrorists had presumably been shot, for one hand grenade fell out of the water cart in which it had been hidden and the police were alerted. An enormous number of Viet-Minh guerrillas have already lost their lives because they have been found attempting to enter cities in disguise. The effort may in the end prove to be unrewarding. The assassinations of French officials have not notably altered the French determination to hold onto the country. Asked why he did not encourage assassinations in Kuomintang territory, Mao Tse-tung answered, "We are not fighting individuals; we are fighting a rotten social system." It may be—it almost certainly is—as simple as that.

There were still further dangers. There come to all revolutionary movements, if they have fought on the defensive over a long period of time, a curious weariness, together with a sense of intolerable frustration. At such times excesses are committed, and these excesses in turn tend to alienate the people. Most of these excesses are useless. On January 9, 1950, the Viet-Minh organization called for a mass protest by students in front of the Ministry of Education at Saigon against the installation of Bao Dai as chief of state. Two thousand students attended the demonstration. According to a classic pattern, the police fired into the crowd, some forty students were injured, and one was killed. The students thereupon ordered a general strike on the following day, a day of solidarity and mourning, but it is doubtful whether anything was gained by an example of "terrorism in reverse." The provocation was not extreme. It was simply that colonial police under such conditions can be expected to fire into a crowd of students, because students belong to a class they find themselves incapable of understanding. There may be advantages in acquiring martyrs, but they are not so considerable as the advantage of having live students. It would seem likely that for some considerable time to come guerrilla wars are fought best by guerrillas. The kind of organization which Viet-Minh has intro-

duced in the Plaine des Joncs, the large southern redoubt which abuts upon Saigon, where the GHQ, hospitals, and arms factories are concealed among the swamps and the canals are roofed over by water palms so that the movement of soldiers in the river sampans is invisible from the air, has a validity which is denied to terrorist activity. One of the sharpest lessons learned by the Chinese Communists was that "adventurism" nearly always failed: the task of guerrilla fighters is to conserve their strength and expand their basis of operations. Viet-Minh with its two vast redoubts, one among the northern hills and the other among the southern swamps, was following a traditional guerrilla policy which goes back to the times of ancient Chinese dynasties. From these redoubts no military force will probably ever be able to remove them.

It would seem to follow that the sending of arms to the French garrisons in Indochina is an act of insanity comparable to the sending of arms to the Kuomintang, and it may have the effect of altering the war *in favor of Viet-Minh*. There is now being sent \$15,000,000 worth of arms; this is to be followed by \$23,000,000 worth of economic aid. Unfortunately, the economic aid will not be sent with the same urgency, and there is no indication that it will be spent in a way which will sensibly alter the living conditions of the peasants. The Kuomintang had thought of American weapons as the French had thought of the Maginot Line: they had employed them as visible screens offering imaginary protection. Meanwhile, the war will be fought against the dark-clad guerrillas who can cut the roads whenever they desire and then melt into the forests where neither bulldozers nor mortars can follow them. It would be in the highest degree dangerous to invoke the experience of Korea. The North Koreans had no extensive experience of guerrilla warfare; for the most part they fought positional battles, employing guerrillas and small infiltrating units for their nuisance value, and the threatened guerrilla campaign did not occur in South Korea. The Viet-Minh guerrillas, with far greater experience, can be expected to proceed with far greater success. The North Koreans did not, as they might well have done, employ "armored guerrillas," that is, small groups of highly skilled guerrillas armed with bazookas, artillery, radio coordination and air support. If they had, they might have been more successful. Meanwhile, there is some evidence that



Viet-Minh is employing "armored guerrillas" on a scale never previously attempted. The crushing defeat of the French legionaries in the narrow gorge leading from Caobang showed Viet-Minh's mastery of guerrilla warfare, and suggested that the French generals, desperately holding onto untenable frontier posts, had not learned the lessons of the Chinese war. For reasons of prestige they attacked Thai Nguyen, the Viet-Minh capital, which lies in the hills less than forty miles from Hanoi, exactly as Chiang Kai-shek attacked Yenan, and with the same result: the highly mobile Viet-Minh command took to the hills on pack ponies, and did not spare a thought for their capital or seek to defend it. Less than a week later they launched concentrated attacks on three frontier posts on the Chinese border, annihilated the 3,000 legionaries at Caobang, proceeded with harassing attacks in the neighborhood of Hanoi itself, and cut the water pipeline to Haiphong. They appear to possess American arms, including some of the 60,000 modern rifles captured by the Chinese Communists when they seized Hainan, some 105-mm. guns, and limitless supplies of improved small arms and modern machine guns; and with the capture of the frontier posts there opens out to them the inexhaustible treasure of arms which may be supplied to them by the Chinese. The trickle will soon become a flood. Almost certainly Hanoi must fall, and with it there will go the rice areas of South Tonkin. The French would be wiser if they surrendered the occupied territory in the north; they would be wiser still if they attempted to solve their military problems by political means.

There is no reason to believe that they will. The war has become a habit, but the political context of the habit has changed since the day in 1946 when they broke their agreement with Viet-Minh. The "conquer offensive," promised for the winter of 1950, can hardly fail, at least in the north; and though the French have set up around Hanoi brick fortresses and thick fences of sharpened bamboo sticks, the Viet-Minh guerrillas now possess heavy arms which can destroy the fortresses, and they have always possessed knives to cut bamboo. To fight effectively against the Viet-Minh guerrillas the French would need highly skilled paratroopers able to land with heavy equipment in jungles; they would also need a supporting force of perhaps 500,000 guerrillas. Without these they must fail; and since there is no hope that they will obtain these, they must inevitably fail.

Sooner or later there will come from Paris the cry, "O Varus, where are my legions?"

The tragedy of the war is that it need never have happened. It did not begin as a war fought by Communists against the West. Inevitably, and largely as the result of French actions, this is what it has become. In 1946 Ho Chih-minh would have accepted a place in the French Union. In 1947 he wanted nothing more than that the French should go. By 1949 it became clear that he would have to become an ally and friend of China. When on January 18, 1950, Chou En-lai acknowledged a letter from Ho Chih-minh and agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Viet-Minh, it became clear that more than the formal exchange of diplomats was intended; and thereafter it became inevitable that the Tong Bo, led by the hard nucleus of Communists within the government, should become the most powerful influence. Originally the Tong Bo had been the Association for the Study of Marxism; it has become a huge and widespread revolutionary organ with ramifications throughout Indochina, with a governing body of its own. Soon enough the Tong Bo will inevitably have to take power in its own hands. As the connection with Communist China grows closer, the power of the Communists increases in Indochina. For the moment, only members of the government are Communists; soon all will be Communists.

Meanwhile, to support Bao Dai is simply to support the symbol of colonial oppression, a strange fat king hated by his countrymen, so insecure that he spends the greater part of his time away from Indochina. As always, the best solutions lie with the United Nations, which could summon both sides of the conflict to a conference and insist upon a cease fire and the gradual elimination of French dominance. The United Nations should be in a position to develop its own safeguards against one-party rule. It should also be able to bring economic support to the peasants whose fields have been laid waste.

"We shall not give in to them," Ho Chih-minh said recently. "Even if they take us one by one, and tear off our skins, we shall not give in to them." He seems to have meant it.

## IX

### BURMA: The Crystal-Clear Chaos

"How are they getting on in the fight?" asked the King. The Messenger replied: "They're getting on very well. Each of them has been down about eighty-seven times."

—LEWIS CARROLL, *Through the Looking Glass*

AT THE head of the Burmese state there is a young, wiry, and immensely handsome Buddhist scholar, whose chief claim to historical fame is that he has survived, over a period of three years, eight separate large-scale insurrections directed against his government. At various times his capital has been surrounded, its river approaches have been held by tribesmen in fleets of motor launches, its communications with the wealth of Upper Burma have been cut off by marauding bands of Communists, who disobeyed the primitive law of Communism by fighting against each other, and there have been occasions when he controlled hardly more than a few hundred acres of Rangoon. On one memorable occasion, when it appeared to him that even these few hundred acres could no longer be controlled, he asked his cabinet whether it would not be advisable for the government itself to go underground. It was remarked at the time that he made the suggestion seriously, but with one of those mysterious and gentle smiles which are more common perhaps in Burma than elsewhere; shortly after his cabinet had voted against the proposal, he returned to his Buddhist prayers.

Of the Asiatic leaders who have risen to power since the war, Thakin Nu is the one who has the least ambition. His chief desire

throughout most of his life has been to read English poetry and study the Buddhist sutras, and even these desires he would willingly surrender for the contemplative life of the wandering Buddhist monk. He said once that he admired the British more than he admired any other race except his own, yet this did not prevent him from joining a revolutionary party dedicated to the overthrow of the British even if it meant a Japanese invasion of Burma. Though a Buddhist, he has signed death sentences. Though a socialist, he has been incapable of introducing socialism into Burma. Though he has an admiration for Marx, and has been known to describe himself as a Marxist, he has found himself opposed by five armed Communist parties. Though he said once that he regarded the possession of power as a terrifying responsibility, and that he would refuse it if it were ever offered to him, he has steadily risen to power. At a time when the Burmese revolutionaries were pretending to work together with the Japanese, who had invaded their country, Thakin Nu found himself minister of foreign affairs and later minister of propaganda—two posts which the Japanese regarded with the gravest suspicion. As soon as he emerged from obscurity, he became a power behind the scenes in the small, close-knit revolutionary movement which grew out of Rangoon University. Occasionally, and often for long intervals, he would disappear into a Buddhist monastery; as soon as he left the monastery gate behind him he seems to have found a portfolio in his hands. He has been accused of cunning and the desire to back into the limelight. Both charges remain unproved. He is not a complex figure and he has no desire to accept or invent complexities. He came to power when another Buddhist, U Saw, gave the order to murder seven of his close friends who were cabinet members and for the most part atheists. He has sworn that at the earliest opportunity he will become a Buddhist monk again. There are striking similarities between Thakin Nu and Soetan Sjahrir, who became at the age of thirty-five the first prime minister of revolutionary Indonesia and three years later calmly stepped down from the premiership and continued his philosophical studies.

In the East there was nothing surprising in the fact that young scholars rocketed into power in a revolutionary era. The tradition of the scholar-ruler was age-old. So, too, was the tradition of the scholar-soldier. The revolt of Burma was planned on the campus

of Rangoon University by boys who called themselves *Thakins*, or Masters. By this they meant that they regarded themselves as the schoolmasters of the revolution. They proved to be excellent technicians as well as teachers, and they demonstrated a traditional capacity to fight guerrilla war against the Japanese, when the Japanese demands became overwhelming. It had taken British and Indian troops five years to round up the guerrillas who melted into the forests after the capitulation of King Thibaw in 1885. The tragedy of Burma lay precisely here: in that mountainous and wooded country guerrilla warfare was an almost exceptionally easy game, to be played with a kind of joyful disregard for consequences. There were curious contradictions in the character of the Burmese. Gentle, passive, and graceful, they could become ungente and murderously active at the least provocation: the crime statistics of Burma are almost the highest in the world. It was almost inevitable that the revolution, which had been mapped out by old Thakin Kodaw Hmine, the professor of social sciences at the University of Rangoon, in the quietness of his study, surrounded by the young students who swore an oath that they would achieve independence, should have become an almost infinitely disintegrating thing, for the revolution had not taken account of the latent anarchism in the Burmese.

When the Burmese Government was installed in Windermere Park, a fashionable suburb of Rangoon, behind barbed-wire fences fifteen feet high, it came to be known as the Concentration Camp. Whatever else it was, it was not a concentration of power. In 1948 the armed forces under Thakin Nu consisted of 12,000 men, three Spitfires, some motor launches, a frigate called the *Mayu*, one or two coastal vessels, eight gunboats, and a mountain battery concealed in someone's garage. More important perhaps, there was an uncounted number of rusty machine guns which had been hidden during the Japanese occupation or had been taken over by the Burmese from the British or the Japanese. The resources were few, and the only possible strategy was to wait until the various splinter groups busily fighting one another were exhausted, and then to strike. Fortunately for the outnumbered government forces, personal hatreds between the rival factions and furious differences in doctrine—the White and the Red Flag Communists usually hated each other more than they hated the government—prevented any lasting

military mergers among them. Each formed hard, close-knit islands of resistance deep in the jungles or in captured towns, from which they sent out sporadic waves of guerrillas, with the result that a single village might be twice communized by different Communist factions, fired by the Karens, captured by the Burmese Auxiliary Force under U Tin Tut, an Oxford rugger blue and the most courageous as he was the most active of the Thakins, and finally removed, piece by piece, as ants will remove a dead butterfly, by guerrillas who belonged to no party but were simply attempting to survive in the jungles. The mortality rate in Burma reached terrible proportions, and was reflected in the mortality rate within the government. Nearly the whole of the government was assassinated in July, 1947, and U Tin Tut's assassination in September, 1948, introduced almost unbearable strains within the surviving leaders, who recognized that he possessed a rigid strength which Thakin Nu lacked.

The continuous rebellions in Burma had a peculiarly unreal character. It was as though a fairy story had suddenly turned into a grotesque story of small giants tearing one another to pieces. Thakin Nu was perfectly conscious of the air of unreality in the revolutionary war. He liked to tell the story of the actor who played the tiger in the famous Burmese drama *Mai U*. While waiting for his cue to chase the villain, he fell asleep, only to wake up suddenly in the middle of the next play, where Buddha is seen as a young prince setting off on his horse Kantakka to lead the life of an ascetic. Thinking he was still in the previous play, the actor chased savagely after the young prince. But if the grotesque fairylike character of the drama remained, the Burmese rebels demonstrated one fact that was not sufficiently realized either in Asia or in the West: *all the Asiatic revolutions tended to disintegrate*, if only because colonial rule had failed to integrate the Asiatic communities.

We have seen this process of disintegration operating in Indonesia, where the revolutionary leaders from the beginning were perfectly conscious of the underlying anarchy and consciously took measures to stem its influence. In India a similar and far more violent form of disintegration occurred. It was evident in Indochina and in China itself, where provincialism ruined whatever chances the Kuomintang might have once possessed to rule over the country. Provincialism still remains in China, though the Chinese Communists, fol-

lowing the practice of most dynasties once they come to power, have already carved out new shapes of provinces and intend to change others. In Asia the village and the province come before the nation in men's loyalties. A Karen living in the high plateau land of North Burma sees nothing in common between himself and the Rangoon city dweller: he fights for the survival of his own tribe. The tendency toward "centrifugalism" will remain as long as education is not completely organized, as long as it fails to permeate down to the tribes. For some time to come, all over Asia, the village communities will remain a law to themselves, giving apparent obedience to the central authority, but exerting their own authority in defiance of the central authority whenever they can. One result of this is the quite extraordinary lawlessness which prevails even in states which have strong central governments: a mile outside Jakarta a man holds his life in his hands. It is the same if a man travels a mile outside Hanoi, Rangoon, Manila, or even Delhi. The Burmese rebellions were merely demonstrating a continual facet of the Asiatic revolt, and its importance is to be measured by the fact that Burma demonstrated, not an extreme form of the revolt so much as a normal evolution. In other countries luck, the presence of foreign soldiers, or of a leader with almost magic powers to sway multitudes contributed to a stability which was more apparent than real.

There were other factors which tended toward instability. The natural tendency of the Burman during the dry-season idleness to engage in lawlessness was one contributing factor; the severity of the teachers in the Buddhist schools may have been another, for a boy who left the harsh discipline of the schools, exulted in his new-found freedom and tended toward a life of lawlessness; and the decay of religious sanctions was still a third. The extent of the intellectual disruption in Burma can be realized from the inordinate number of divisions within the single parties. There were five Communist parties: the Red Flags, the White Flags, the Upper Burma Communist Association, the Lower Burma Communist party, and the Democratic Communist party. There was also discovered recently in the heart of Rangoon a secret Communist center which apparently possessed no affiliation with any of these. These splinter parties possessed their own organizations, their own militia, their own secret sources of funds, and their own programs. The Socialist

party was equally divided. There were White Band PVO's (People's Volunteer Organization), Yellow Band PVO's and the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League), which had been the predominant party during the war. There were large Karen armies in the south and north, and there were also scattered groups of Mon Shan, Chin, and Kachin guerrillas. Most of these organizations still remain, and in addition there are scattered groups which remain loyal to the Myochit and Mahabama parties, rightist groups which gradually found themselves deprived of political importance. The White Band PVO's were stated to have surrendered late in May, 1950, but in August they were still fighting at Kayan, only thirty-eight miles from Rangoon itself. The Karens have been removed from their stronghold in Toungoo and the White Flag communists from their stronghold in Prome, but the fighting continues. It is significant of the power wielded by the rebels that only in September, 1950, did the government feel itself strong enough to remove the cocoons of barbed wire around Windermere Park.

The plethora of parties in Burma represented an inevitable evolution. Except in India, there were a vast number of mushroom parties in all the revolutionary countries of Asia. At least fourteen parties were represented within the Chinese Democratic League. The Chinese Communist Government is formed theoretically, and perhaps in practice, of members belonging to eight different parties. The endless chain of parties, each with different names and different avowed objectives, which existed in Indonesia before the war merely illustrated the divergent opinions of a people intent upon regaining their independence in divergent ways. By the end of the war they had grouped themselves into three main parties, and the splinter parties were never strongly organized. In Burma it was as though the historical process through which Indonesia had passed for twenty years had to be repeated after independence had been virtually assured in two or three years.

But though there were, and still are, at least twelve active parties in Burma, eight of them armed, there is the danger that the main struggle will be hidden simply because so many minor struggles are being fought at the same time. The main struggle is clearly between the socialists and the Communists. The Communists promised most: hence their following. They could always rally the discontented with



their slogan, "No foreigners, no landlords, no rent, no revenue, and land for all." Ironically, the most impressive of the Communist leaders, Hari Narayan Goshal, who went under the name Ba Tin, was himself a foreigner, belonging to the race which was even more despised in prewar Burma than the British.

Like nearly everyone else who rose to power in Burma after the war, Goshal studied at Rangoon University and became a Thakin. There he became friendly with Thein Pe, the frail, sickly, and extraordinarily youthful student of economics whose conception of Communism was derived, not from the publications of the Comintern, but from the books published by Mr. Victor Gollancz in England in the series called the Left Book Club. The covers of these books were a faded scarlet which rapidly turned pink in the hot sun. Thein Pe's enthusiasm for Communism as it was seen through the eyes of Victor Gollancz and John Strachey was contagious, and it was through him that the Thakins came to study Communism. Soe Gyi and Than Tun, together with Thein Pe and Goshal, formed a Marxist Study Circle, wrote mimeographed tracts, addressed meetings of the peasants, and came into contact with Thakin Mya, a wiser, older, and far more brilliant man, who was later to become deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and minister of finances; still later, he was to be assassinated. In its origins the Marxist Study Circle was a typical student group of which Thein Pe was the acknowledged leader. But Communism made few converts. It was decided to work through the Thakin party and to attempt to convert the Thakins to Communism. The effort failed, largely because Aung San completely failed, as he repeatedly said, to understand "what on earth the *Communist Manifesto* is all about." It was not that Marxism was difficult: it was simply that it seemed irrelevant, and the Thakins, who were young and untired, did at least know what was relevant to modern Burma. Thakin Mya, who had been a Boy Scout and the honorary superintendent of the Tharrawaddy Buddhist School, did understand what the *Communist Manifesto* was all about, actively engaged in peasant agitation, and presided over the All-Burma Peasants Conference at Rangoon in 1939, where he showed a talent for compromise which was shared neither by Goshal nor by Than Tun; and gradually it became clear in the higher circles of the Thakin party that Communism was an issue

which would have to be fought. With the Japanese invasion there came an uneasy alliance between the Thakins, who were socialists, and the Communists who had been allowed to enter the party when it came to be called the Anti-Japanese Freedom League. Almost immediately after the war the alliance was broken, with the extreme right and the extreme left taking up positions in opposition. Characteristically, the extreme right employed the weapon of assassination, and the extreme left, secretly at first and then openly, began to amass guerrilla forces. The Communist guerrillas were already in existence long before Goshal's visit to India in February, 1948, and his return with a blueprint for the capture of the government by means of uprisings. The Communists had even fought pitched battles. What was new was the deliberate plan to overthrow the government and employ terrorism on a large scale. Goshal's return coincided with Than Tun's emergence as a strong force in Burmese Communism. In 1946 he had removed Soe Gyi from the party, after having been himself removed. In the Central Executive Committee of the party a long, hard-fought battle for supremacy was being waged, and Than Tun's authority was still in doubt at the end of 1947. When the Burmese mission to London returned in October, 1947, with a treaty agreeing to the Union of Burma outside the Commonwealth, his value as a prophet was undermined, for he had prophesied continually that the mission would return empty-handed. He determined upon drastic action, and he would probably have begun the revolt even without the directives received from the Asian Youth Conference which Goshal had attended. Than Tun is brutal and uneducated; his speeches are excessively repetitious and delivered in a screeching voice; but he possesses a hard dramatic talent, and from the beginning he has regarded himself as a guerrilla leader. Thakin Soe Gyi, who formed a Communist party of his own immediately after being expelled by the Central Committee, was far more resourceful and intelligent, and though his party is called Trotskyite by his opponents, he is in fact a pure Marxist. When the White Flag Communists raised the flag of rebellion, he followed; and though no truce was signed between them and they have fought sporadic battles against each other, they were usually separated from each other by the Karens, who were already occupying Central Burma.

The Karens, led by Sawba (Chief) U Gyi, were far more menacing to Thakin Nu's government than the Communists during the early stages of the revolt. They were well organized. To some small extent they had been aided by the British. There had occurred during the forties of the last century a mass conversion of the Karens by American Baptist missionaries, who had also been active in converting the Chinese. The conversion of the Chinese led indirectly to the Taiping Rebellion. The rebellion of the Karens was delayed, but it came to a head at the time when the Communists were preparing their own revolt. Under British rule the Karens had been administered separately from the central areas, and they were not subject to the Burmese Parliament under the constitution of 1937. Independent, deeply religious, skilled soldiers (until recently the commander in chief of the Burmese Army was a Karen called Smith Dun), they possessed an unruly contempt for the Burmese, and demanded strict autonomy and the creation of the State of Karenistan over most of eastern Burma. Though Thakin Nu agreed to the creation of an autonomous state, he was not prepared to sacrifice the greater part of Burma to a single tribe. The Karens, however, were in a strong position: most of the officers in the army were Karens; they had large supplies of ammunition left by the retreating Japanese; they had the best soldiers, and they also had bases in South Burma near Rangoon, where large numbers of Karens had settled. Thakin Nu's policy toward the Karens has been to settle the dispute by diplomacy, while he sees no hope of any diplomatic solution of the struggle against the Communists. Gradually the divided technique is beginning to show signs of success; and while the Karens remain quiescent, the Communist armies have slowly been disintegrating.

The Communist danger remains. To put an end to it, Thakin Nu has often borrowed their thunder. The famous fifteen points which he drew up with the help of Thakin Thein Pe, who wrote the first draft on his sickbed, envisages village self-government, the public ownership of land, and a united front. It also envisages a two-year plan for economic development and the formation of a League for the Propagation of Marxism and other Socialist Writings. The fifteen points were later reduced to fourteen, chiefly as the result of

foreign dislike of the officially encouraged league. There is some evidence to show that the withdrawal is only nominal, Thakin Nu has insisted that the study of Marxism is relevant and should be encouraged among socialists, and he has pointed to Bernard Shaw's prolonged study of Marxism as evidence that it can do little harm in intelligent hands, and may do some good. Like Nehru, he calls himself "half a Marxist," and he sees in the alliance of Marxism and Buddhism some small hope for the future. But it is doubtful whether either Marxism or Buddhism are motivating factors within his government. He has attempted against unreasonable odds to introduce Sjahrir's "reasonable revolution." He has continually experimented. With an intense dislike of the pomp which goes with his position—he is apt to say to interviewing reporters, "You know what it's all about, you take my job"—his chief weapons are precisely those which brought Sjahrir to power: a clear understanding of the forces which move governments and a quite extraordinary humanity. More than any other Eastern premier he has been faced with chaotic conditions, and that he should have survived them so well is a tribute to a fantastic skill.

Meanwhile, the situation in Burma is still dangerous. Though the Communists are disintegrating, there is no reason to believe they might not be able to stage a comeback. They have powerful friends over the border. The Burma Road is still open, and there are at least seventy thousand Communist troops in Yunnan. The Karens have not yet received the State of Karenistan, and though Burma has been able to export a million tons of rice, barely half her prewar export, her financial condition remains unstable; and it will be at least a year before the larger oil wells are working again.

Burma represented an extreme form of the Asiatic revolt, but there is a sense in which it followed a perfectly normal course. The minor splits and dissensions in China were concealed by the overriding division between two immense forces; in Burma divergencies were openly expressed, and contrary opinions were given power and weight by the presence of guerrilla armies. The Burmese learned to their cost that there could be more than two contrary opinions. It is at least conceivable that when the wars are over, the Burmese Government will be more solidly entrenched than any other in the Far East, for all opinions will have been tested in war, and the final

amalgam of opinions will represent the real social forces of the country. When that happens, Thakin Nu will have disappeared from the scene. He will be wandering through Burma unrecognized, carrying a beggar's wooden bowl and wearing a homespun yellow robe, indistinguishable from all the other poonghies who travel the same roads.

## X

### IRAN: The Pattern in the Carpet

Our sovereign has grandiose plans in his head. He wants to seize Manchuria and proceed towards the annexation of Korea; he also plans to seize Tibet under his rule. He wants to take Persia and to seize not only the Bosphorus but also the Dardanelles.

—COUNT ALEXEI KUROPATKIN, *Memoirs*

THE Czarist pattern of conquest at the turn of the century was resurrected by the Soviet Union in 1945 almost without change, and though there were minor differences, and there were occasions when the screw turned in a way which would have shocked Nicholas II, the pattern was to be maintained by Stalin, and in this pattern Iran possessed an essential place.

It was not always so. There was a time shortly after the Revolution when Iran was regarded with especial favor by the Communists, who had no hope then of bringing about a revolution in the country. In his "Manifesto to the East," Lenin specifically pointed to Turkey and Persia, with their Moslem populations, and said they should have "the right freely to determine their own fate," and he canceled the secret treaties signed between the British and the Czarist governments concerning the partition of these countries. "The Russian Republic, and her government, the Soviet of People's Commissars, are against the seizure of foreign lands," he wrote, adding that it was perfectly proper that Constantinople should remain in Moslem hands. In effect, the "Manifesto to the East" in its unmythological sections accepted the inevitable. Lenin could hardly do other-

wise, for in December, 1917, when the manifesto was written, the Soviet Union was still weak and insecure, and Turkey and Persia were the logical bases from which attacks on the Soviet Union might be directed; in fact it was from Turkey that Enver Pasha later raided the Soviet Union, and it was from northern Persia that the British led their expedition against Baku. There was a "soft underbelly" to the Soviet Union in this area, and the Communists were aware of this weakness. Though the "Manifesto to the East" was to have important and unsuspected consequences in the future, it was mainly directed toward pacifying the Moslems in the rear of the Soviet Union. For this reason the Soviet Union gave arms to Kemal Pasha, hoping that he would form an alliance, and it gave financial support to Riza Shah Pahlavi for the same reason. In both cases the Soviet Union found that it had made a strategical mistake: in these Moslem countries Mohammedanism, far from allowing itself to form an alliance with Communism, has steadfastly resisted the Communist advance, with the result that even today the Moslems in Russian Azerbaijan are accused of preferring their religion to the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.<sup>1</sup> What is known as the "Manifesto to the East" was in fact addressed "to all toiling Moslems of Russia and the East," and it is perhaps to Lenin's credit that he detected so very early in the history of the revolution where his main enemies lay: his first enemy was Great Britain, his second was the Moslem Empire which stretches from Morocco to the East Indies. There is a great significance in the fact that Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and the Republic of Indonesia, five countries which might have been supposed open to Communist pressure, have so far resisted that pressure successfully.

There are, of course, reasons why this should be so, and not all of them are connected with religion or religious feeling. The historic tendency of Mohammedanism has been to create a purely feudal empire, ruled over by the innumerable descendants of the Prophet.

<sup>1</sup> In an article published in the July, 1950, issue of *Bolshevik*, there occurred one of the most violent attacks on the Moslem religion ever to appear in the Soviet press. Islam is castigated as a religion which piously attempts to use Mohammed's ideas to bring ruin and enslavement on the people, and which has become an important tool of British and Turkish imperialism. The "bourgeois nationalism" of Azerbaijan intellectuals has been repeatedly denounced in the Soviet press.

In the Near East the tribal nomadic associations of the Moslems can have little in common with the dictatorship of the proletariat, even though the nomads of Mongolia have been brought into line with Soviet theory. Still more important, there exists in the Moslem ethos a peculiar piety toward the sacred shrines, a deep sense of religious purpose, and a horror of atheism: their mythology cuts clean across the Communist mythology. Since they have no reason to worship a Great Father in the Kremlin, because there is a greater in their mosques, and even in their direst poverty they are unable to accept an atheist mythology, it is unlikely that they will ever accept Communism as it is now formulated. The most powerful enemy of Communism in the spiritual sense is probably not Christianity with its many sects and its extraordinary adaptability, but Mohammedanism with its relatively few sects and its fanatical rigidity. And in Iran, dominated by one of the most extreme forms of Mohammedanism, the difficulties of the Communists are perhaps greatest. Yet even here, and mostly in the industrial cities, Communism has penetrated deeply. It has succeeded for the same reason that it has succeeded elsewhere in Asia: a revolution had become necessary, and they alone possessed the oil which would set light to the rotting timbers.

Today there are three centers of power within the Soviet Union. One radiates down from Moscow through the Urals; another, in Transcaucasia, centers around Baku,<sup>2</sup> and the third is fixed within an immense area dominated by Tashkent. The Transcaucasian center intimately affects Iran, for the Russians remember how easily Baku was captured by the British, and with something approaching panic they remember that Baku is defended by no natural frontiers. There is no natural Russian frontier between the Bosphorus and Afghanistan. Along this two-thousand-mile frontier they are weakest. They know how easily air attacks from bases in Iran, Iraq, or Turkey could reach their Caucasian oil fields, and Ukraine wheat fields, and the industrial complexes of the Urals and Kazakhstan. To be secure they must possess or neutralize the Caspian-Arabian basin, which contains 30 per cent of the world's known oil supplies;

<sup>2</sup> Baku and "Second Baku" are together believed to be producing two-thirds of the total oil output of the Soviet Union. Baku is only 200 miles from the Iranian frontier, and "Second Baku" is slightly less than 600 miles from the border.



and they must always look with favor upon a sudden invasion of the Tigris Valley, which would allow them to cut across three important pipelines. The temptation to invade Persian Azerbaijan, where a fifth of the Iranian population lives and where the bulk of Iranian foodstuffs is produced, is perhaps even greater, for here at least some kind of cynical legality could be imposed upon the conquest.

Azerbaijan forms a horn lying between Turkey and the Caspian Sea. Mountainous and generally arid except for the rich valleys, its farmland owned by absentee landlords, its peasants crushed beneath accumulated debts and by the appalling effects of a two-year drought, the province with its 2,500,000 inhabitants is now ripe for rebellion. If the Soviet frontier is weakest between the Bosphorus and Afghanistan, the defense of the free world against the Soviet Union is probably weakest in Azerbaijan, and everything would seem to point to the fact that it is here that help is most urgently needed.

For the Russians an invasion or a protectorate over Azerbaijan offers immense advantages. Deprived of this province, Iran would be incapable of feeding itself, the capital would be under attack, the Russians would possess control over Turkey's eastern frontier, and the Kurds would be able to satisfy their desire for an independent Kurdistan, for once Azerbaijan was taken, there would be no great difficulty in carving out of portions of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran another Soviet republic for the benefit of the 3,500,000 Kurd tribesmen, who have little enough in common with the Persians of the interior. Unfortunately for the Russians, the Kurds are unlikely to prove malleable material for a socialist state. Husky, nomadic, speaking a language akin to Turkish, desiring, like the Armenians, only to be left alone within their own borders, dreaming continually of Saladin, who came from Kurdish stock, they have rebelled repeatedly, and at least three Kurdish rebellions have taken place within the Soviet frontier. The Javanroodi tribe rebelled in September, 1950, and in the gray mountains of Kermanshah their white tents were blasted by bombers sent from Tehran. Once again the many had to suffer for the improvisations of the less, for though the tribe numbers 20,000, the militant rebels numbered between 1,000 and 2,000. The rebellion was put down, but it was not the last of the

Kurdish rebellions, which can be expected to continue until an independent Kurdistan is formed. Immediately after the last war the Russians attempted to foster a Kurdish People's Republic. It collapsed after a few months. Meanwhile, a secret Communist radio within Azerbaijan continues to beam inflammatory messages to the tribes.

The Kurdish People's Republic failed because the Kurds had no desire to live under Russian dominance; the Azerbaijan People's Republic, which existed for a whole year, failed because the Iranian premier, Ahmed Qavam, sent an army against it; but the fact that it was able to exist for so long without any internal upheavals spoke much for the attitude of the peasants. The republic was proclaimed on December 12, 1945, by Jafaar Pishevari, a veteran Communist who had joined the party at the time of the Russian Revolution. He was an astute politician. The Soviet occupation forces were still in Iran, and with their protection there seemed no reason why the Azerbaijan Republic should not have continued indefinitely. They had not counted upon Soviet Russia's thirst for oil. Qavam, more astute than Pishevari, pretended to be pro-Soviet, and in this way convinced the Russians that if they withdrew their army he would offer them an oil concession in northern Iran. When they withdrew, they received no oil concession and the army was immediately ordered to attack Tabriz. Pishevari escaped over the frontier, being more successful than the Kurdish leader Ghazi Mohammed, who was captured, convicted of treason, and executed.

The Soviet Government is now wary of interfering in Azerbaijan. There are occasional border incidents, tracer ammunition is fired into the air along the frontiers at night by both sides, occasionally there are phosphorus flares, and gun positions are unaccountably changed in a ceaseless war of nerves. But the havoc this creates in Azerbaijan is less than the havoc created by the absentee landlords, the bribery of officials, the sabotage of relief shipments, and the poverty of the province. Though it is precisely in Azerbaijan that a social and economic revolution had been necessary for the last ten years, the province still seems to be regarded by the government as a milch cow to be plundered at will. Along the slender thread of defense lines which runs from Tabriz in the west to Ardebil in the east, the whole future of western Asia may be decided. There is

nothing to suggest that the Iranian Army could hold up a Soviet advance for more than half an hour.

In the face of the Azerbaijan crisis, the Tehran Government embarked in 1949 on a seven-year plan for national industrialization. Long overdue, the plan, conceived by Overseas Consultants, Inc., of New York City, aimed to increase the agricultural and industrial output of Iran more than 200 per cent. Financed from internal Iranian loans and annual oil royalties of more than \$50,000,000, it received the benediction of the Shah, who placed his brother in complete control of the financial arrangement of the plan. For a while the seven-year plan became the key word for recovery. A vast hope filled the Persians. Then difficulties began. The government existed by virtue of the oil royalties, which were already earmarked. The internal loans were even more difficult to raise. One of the more urgent requirements of the seven-year plan was a cement mill near Tabriz. It was never built because the people of Azerbaijan refused to subscribe the stipulated 50 per cent of the cost.<sup>3</sup> There were difficulties in other directions. Corruption was so widespread that it could be calculated for beforehand; unfortunately the calculations showed that rather more than a third of the money expended during the course of the plan would enter the pockets of corrupt officials. Here was an opportunity for American capitalism to show its feathers and demonstrate that it was economically sound, but the opportunity was allowed to pass: on such a soil capitalism cannot flourish.

In Iran there is almost no middle class: men are either immensely wealthy or immensely poor. The modern traveler who enters the palaces of the princes, which are far more sumptuous than even palaces have a right to be, hears the cry of *khanna! khanna!* the moment he leaves. *Khanna* means "bread." It is a disturbing cry, and made more disturbing by the knowledge that the government, immersed in the problem of maintaining its rule against a threatened Communist rising, has failed to make any real contact with the masses. Worse still, though a Communist rising is unlikely, the government behaves as though it were always about to happen, and there are indiscriminate arrests of all those who dare to oppose the government or partake of progressive views.

<sup>3</sup> Waldo Drake in the *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 6, 1950.

The absence of a middle class is one of the more alarming signs; the absence of incentives to work is another. Heshmat Ala'i, writing in *Fortune* in August, 1948, described a situation which still applies. He said:

Iranian living standards are themselves destructive of productivity. On a rice plantation where practically every worker takes his *nawbeh* (turn) to quit for an hour or two to lie in the sun shivering out his malarial chill, thousands of work hours are lost each year. Sanitation, education and other social-improvement projects are, therefore, urgent. But they should be financed either by grants or from increased taxation. Loans are not suitable for such projects since the return on them cannot be collected and paid.

The control of trachoma, one of the scourges of Iran, depends upon the cleanliness of individuals. Cleanliness in turn requires supplies of soap and water—both scarce and expensive in Iran. What is needed therefore is an increase in the supply of basic necessities and a cut in their prices. That would create additional purchasing power for workers, consumers and entrepreneurs, setting in motion a continuous expansion of investment and consumption.

Freedom of thought, of expression, and of action are also related to economic development. . . . How fear of authority still operates in Iran the Near East Foundation learned last year. Its agents gave some cash loans and a few cows to some peasants in Varamin, a district twenty-five miles south of Teheran. The next day the peasants returned the money and the cows, saying they could not keep them. They feared to incur the displeasure of the village headman and the cowman who rented cows to them.

Ala'i concluded his analysis of modern Iran by saying:

The most important export commodity the United States has to offer is not its money wealth, but its revolutionary society in which individuals take their chances, express opposition to authority if and when they want to, and feel no dread of punishments if their experiments fail; can they not try again or do something else? The basic requirement of all growth is the opportunity for the citizen to try new ways of production, new methods of doing business, and new means of improving his lot in life.

Some, but not all, of the implications of Heshmat Ala'i's statement were understood by Field Marshal Ali Razmara when he became

premier in August, 1950. He immediately ordered that the prices of bread and soap should be lowered, and set about decentralizing the government. At least half a million people in a country of 15,000,000 are unemployed. To avoid graft he arranged to hand out money and materials to each of the eighty-four districts in which Iran is divided. The seven-year plan had failed, and a new plan of public relief had become necessary. He ordered that the names of tax delinquents should be broadcast by the Tehran radio. Since the tax delinquents were known to include half the members of the Majlis, nearly all the previous ministers, the Queen Mother, the princesses, and most, if not all of the landlords, the action suggested a commendable courage, and it was not surprising when the Majlis called him to order on the grounds that he "was not showing sufficient respect toward a governmental organ." It was probably true. If Razmara walked roughshod over the parliament, he could excuse himself by saying that it was not elected by the people and that therefore the members represented no one but themselves. It had long ago lost its usefulness except as a source of corruption; and in that over decorated marble chamber with the Victorian chandeliers no progress toward the reconstruction of Iran was likely to be made. "We are fighting for our very lives," Razmara said. It was not an understatement. He was a "strong man," but unlike most "strong men" he appeared to possess a sense of responsibility toward the people. It was true that, like most soldiers, he trusted only soldiers and appointed them to high positions, but he had succeeded in stopping the rot, at least temporarily. When in September the Russians offered to resume trading, it looked as though the worst was over, for trade with Russia through Azerbaijan would send new life flowing into that lost province. The Soviet Union offered to purchase rice, wool, hides, gum, dried fruits, and raw cotton in exchange for one-third of Iran's sugar needs, cotton goods, and industrial equipment. With this in his pocket, and the delayed \$25,000,000 loan from Washington, Razmara might be able to turn the tide. "Work, unity, and the fight against social abuses are the only means of salvation," the young Shah had cried on his return from a state visit to America. That was all very well, and the sentiments were admirably expressed; in fact, salvation was likely to come from trade agreements more quickly than from any other source.

Razmara's agreement with Russia came as a surprise to one group of the Iranian population. These were the members of the Tudeh, or Masses party, which was openly Communist. The party had emerged during the war. By 1945 it ranked as Iran's most important political party, with ramifications throughout the government, its leaders coming from the intellectuals who had been imprisoned and tortured by Riza Shah Pahlavi, who was compelled to abdicate largely under British pressure in 1941. They had eight members in the Majlis. They were sufficiently powerful in Azerbaijan to bring about the short-lived Azerbaijan People's Republic, and they remained a force in the land until February, 1949, when, after the attempted assassination of the Shah, the party was dissolved and permanently outlawed. It is probable that the Shah's assailant was not a member of the Tudeh party: there is some evidence to show that he was a fanatical Moslem. Five hundred arrests were made. Thirteen of the Tudeh leaders were arrested and imprisoned in the "model prison" which lies on the road between Shamram and Tehran. The chief leaders however escaped. These included Dr. Riza Radmanesh, a former professor of physics who led the Tudeh youth organization; Ehsan Tabari, who edited *Mardom* (The People), the Tudeh weekly magazine; and Feridoun Keshawarz, a former minister of education and member of the Central Committee. All three are known to have visited Czechoslovakia. Presumably, one of the chief effects of the mass arrests early in 1949 has been to make the party an even more tightly knit underground organization than it was before.

In the absence of any powerful socialist party, Tudeh's success was inevitable. Its sources lay in the fabulous poverty of the country. Its newspapers *Mardom* and *Rasm* (Thunder) were, and are, intelligently conceived. It was well directed. The secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Tehran, Khachik Gevorkevich Oganessian, who was also the trustee of the Armenian Orthodox Church, provided funds, and concealed Tudeh party members who were in hiding in the immense grounds of the embassy. Though the newspapers were periodically banned throughout 1948 and were completely banned in February, 1949, they regularly appeared; and since no one else offered a program to the people, their program, unlike that of the newspapers financed by the government, was regarded as trust-

worthy. It remains to be seen whether Razmara can offer a program which will rival the policy offered by the obedient "running dogs" of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, Razmara was being attacked from four directions: by the wealthy, whose property he impounded for taxes; by Tudeh, whose members he imprisoned; by the forceful Nationalist Front, which had risen out of Tehran University to attempt to develop a form of socialism; and by the orthodox Moslems, especially those who belonged to the fanatical party called "Fadaian Islam." To them anything less than a theocratic state was anathema. They were surprisingly powerful and surprisingly vociferous, perhaps because they remembered with what energy the former Shah had trampled on their preserves. For Iran the most dangerous possibility was an alliance between Tudeh and the Moslem party, for though Islam is generally a bulwark against Communism, its more extreme forms find common cause with Communism; and in Iran, as in Indonesia, there are all the possibilities of an alliance between extremes. It is significant that the religious leaders in Iran have consistently denounced Razmara and have been the most conspicuous and publicized signers of the Stockholm Peace Petition. In this, too, the Russians have played an extremely cunning hand, for they allowed it to be known that the petition first met the light of day at Karbala, in Iraq, a city which is sacred in the eyes of the Iranian peasants with a sanctity even greater than that which arose from their own golden-domed city of Meshed on the border of Afghanistan.

Soviet policy in the Middle East has never followed a rigid path. As in Iran, all weapons are employed, and a program announced yesterday may be completely reversed tomorrow. The old traditional Communist respect for the Moslems, however, remains, and it was inevitable that Russia should have regarded Israel with suspicion, if only because Israel was a small enclave surrounded by the far more numerous Arab States. By supporting the partition in 1947 and then reversing her decision, Russia successfully antagonized Israel, with the result that the chief Israeli trade union, Israeli Histadruth, is as anti-Communist as the Turkish trade unions; and though there is some penetration of Communist ideas in the Egyptian trade unions, there is little elsewhere. The Soviet stratagem in the Middle East relies largely on the hoped-for uprising of the

Kurds, and from the Kurdish office in Paris and the Baku radio a continual stream of propaganda has been launched under the direction of General Mulla Mustapha Barzani, who succeeded in retreating into the Soviet Union when the Kurdish People's Government in Azerbaijan was destroyed. The man most responsible for its destruction was Ali Razmara, then chief of staff of the Iranian High Command.

Yet the danger of Arab uprisings under Communist direction remains. Extreme Moslems are strongly anti-American, accusing the Americans of irreligion, and they sometimes pretend they see religious forces at work in the Soviet Union. Mythologies meet; fanaticisms find common ground; the extremes of wealth and poverty in the Arab States suggest that there is a perpetual breeding ground for unrest; and though there are few Kurds who listen to the Baku radio praising the "good life" of the 48,000 Kurds under Russian rule, there are enough young students printing Communist propaganda to make the governments of Iraq and Iran uneasy. Even in Lebanon, where the Communist party has been proscribed, there are at least 6,000 underground workers, mostly students. The fault lies with the governments concerned: they have failed wholly to grasp that the students regard themselves as the inheritors of the revolutionary tradition which brought the governments to power. In Lebanon, as indeed in all the countries of the Middle East, the governments are in the hands of the sheiks and the merchants, and there is a minimum expenditure on social services. Under such conditions the students, especially the most dedicated students, have no alternative except to align themselves with the one foreign power which is perpetually encouraging revolution.

The Arab peoples, disillusioned by the policies of the Western powers and the military triumph of Israel, are beginning to listen to these students, many of them trained in Moscow, as they wander in disguise among the tribes people or take jobs as workers in the oil fields. There are large and growing Communist cells among the workers building the trans-Arabian and trans-Iranian pipelines. Trained in sabotage, they will probably be able to cut all the pipelines in the Middle East the moment war breaks out. The extreme Moslem sects, the Wahabis of Saudi Arabia and the Sunyis in Iran, openly tolerate Communism. Meanwhile, the barter agreements



which Soviet Russia is offering to the Middle Eastern states involve, with the establishment of Soviet trading communities in these areas, amazingly powerful centers of Soviet espionage: it is for this reason that Ali Razmara refused to allow the Russians to trade in the open market in Tehran, but insisted that they should keep within the limits of four trade associations dealing directly with the government. In Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Hashemite Jordan, Iraq, Iran, and even in Saudi Arabia the Communists are massing their forces, and their power should not be underestimated. It is here, even more than in Europe or the Far East, that their thrusts can be expected, if only because in Soviet Central Asia there now exists a vast powerhouse which can be used precisely for the purpose of conquering the Middle East.

## XI

# SOVIET ASIA: The Gardens Behind the Mountains

We are free to move as the clouds,  
And this is well-known to our enemies.

—*Kazakh Folksong*

WE ARE accustomed to think of Asia in terms of Persia, Afghanistan, India, China, and all the islands of the South Seas, forgetting or half-forgetting the formidable power which lies north of the Himalayas, the Tien Shan, and the Pamirs. A hundred years ago the territories of Soviet Asia were virgin: they are no longer virgin. Enormous industrial plants, immense new cities are being built in these territories, and there is an air of elaborate secrecy concerning all these places within Soviet Asia. The immense armies hovering on the frontier are supplied from cities whose names and positions we do not always know. The center of gravity of the Soviet Union is shifting toward Central Asia; and henceforth we can expect the main thrusts to take place along the Soviet Asiatic frontiers.

To underestimate the power of Soviet Asia would be dangerous. It would be equally dangerous to underestimate the Russian determination to safeguard her own Asiatic Empire. The gradual infiltration into Sinkiang, the pressure on Iran, the trade agreements with Afghanistan, the oft-repeated desire to hold Manchuria ("Yellow Russia"), the perpetual intrigues in Tibet and along the Northwest Frontier of India: all these spring from the peculiar nature of the

Soviet Asiatic frontier, defended by high mountains and deserts along the middle of the frontier, but with her frontiers in Persia and Manchuria undefended by any natural barriers, for these are in the strictest sense unnatural frontiers. There was a time when Persian and Chinese empires stretched deep into what is now the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, there exist at the two wings of her Asiatic frontiers immense industrial complexes. With the safeguarding of her eastern frontiers accomplished by the victory of the Chinese Communists, the Soviet Union can be expected to turn the full weight of its Asiatic power in the direction of Iran; and the recent trade agreements with Iran and Afghanistan should be regarded as part of a political campaign to safeguard those frontiers, and if possible to expand them.

Few people realize the extent of the industrial growth of Soviet Asia, and how effectively the Turksib railway, which swings down into the Turkmenian Republic and then up toward Siberia, has changed the physical appearance of the country. Where there were deserts there are now collective farms, industries, double-track railways. The cotton of Central Asia clothes the entire Soviet Union. Locomotives are built in Tashkent, there are machine-tool plants in Fergana, and Samarkand has her chemical industries. The industrial growth of Soviet Turkistan can only be compared with the industrial growth of Texas and California, and it has occurred over the same period of time, for it is only during the last ten years that Texas and California have assumed such prodigious rôles in the American economy. Until the outbreak of the war the Soviet regarded Soviet Turkistan as primarily a colonial area. Here there was less interference with the manners and customs of the people, the mullahs remained and the women were still often veiled. With the attack on the Ukraine by the Germans, the importance of these areas increased: the Soviet Middle West became inevitably the base for the reconquest of occupied Russia. Today it has become the base for the conquest of Asia. With the rapid economic and military expansion of Soviet Central Asia, there have been acquired new and substantial bases for launching attacks on Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and (should it ever be necessary) on the countries of the Far East. Soviet Asia is now a power to be reckoned with. Thirty years ago it was in the same position as the renascent revolutionary states

of Asia: a revolution has been imposed upon the jumble of republics in Soviet Asia, and they have long since industrially outstripped countries like Indonesia.

The wealth and power of the half-dozen republics which stretch from the Caspian to the Altai Mountains should be studied carefully, for there, if anywhere, lies the key to the conquest of Asia. Tadzhikistan borders on China and Afghanistan; it has roads which lead down toward India and other roads which lead toward the old silk routes, and that small republic, of whose existence few have heard, lies strategically in a place of immense potential power. The Soviets now have air bases in Afghanistan and in Sinkiang, and gradually both these countries are being drawn into the Soviet orbit. The buffer states are no longer buffer states, but advance posts. One of the six Russian home-based armies has its headquarters in Tashkent, and Tashkent itself, with its immense industries, dominates the area between the Aral Sea and the Pamirs. The Pamirs can be crossed easily by airplane, and Kashmir, which borders on Tadzhikistan, may come to be a part of the Soviet empire sooner than we expect. Who has heard of Osh, or Chu, or Ob? Yet these are important places, and their furious development makes Soviet Turkistan a new and dangerous power in the heart of backward Asia.

In these areas, where the most ancient past and the most modern techniques meet at a point of fusion, there is growing up quietly a modern socialist version of the great Mongol Empire. The snow from the Tien Shan is being used as water power; the uranium engineers are wandering through these valleys with their Geiger counters; cosmic rays are being studied in the high mountains; new and hitherto unknown plants are being grown, and the earth and rivers are being put to new uses. The Oxus, now known as the Amu Darya, has its steamboats; and along the Oxus flows the trade from Afghanistan. Between the Ob and the Irtysh rivers in the north the first atomic-bomb experiment of the Soviets took place. The Soviet government has proclaimed stupendous new hydro-electric and irrigation schemes; the latest, to be carried out in the next six years, is the 700-mile-long Turkmenia Canal which will irrigate and turn into cotton lands many thousands of square miles of desert between the Amu Darya and the Caspian. The silk road across the Gobi Desert between western Sinkiang and eastern China now belongs to the

past; the new motor highway from Alma-Ata into the interior of Sinkiang brings the trade of China to the door of the Soviet Union, and already streams of vehicles flow along the road; indeed, according to Squadron Leader Murray Harris, a British expert who spent years in these regions, the road was used by the Russians during the war to send military supplies to the Kuomintang.<sup>1</sup> The road has the advantage of passing through major oil fields, and from Sinkiang all of China can be reached. The road builders, the railway engineers, and the uranium diggers are keeping in step with political events; and with the Chinese Communist conquest of China the importance of these trade routes in the absence of any large-scale trade with the United States has become paramount. The roads are being widened, railways are being expanded, and the unmapped regions nearby are being surveyed by Russian geological commissions. That there are vast quantities of valuable minerals in these mountains has long been known; it is only since the war that means have become available for exploiting them.

From now on the bulk of the overland traffic between China and the Soviet Union will probably move through Central Asia, for the Trans-Siberian route takes too long. Within our lifetimes we may see Tashkent as the terminal for railways which branch out to Karachi, the Persian Gulf, and the warm-water ports of China, and it is at least significant that the most effective contribution to China's recovery after the civil war has been made by Russian railway engineers. In future the revolution may follow the railways.

Today Uzbekistan, which was still a pastureland at the turn of the century, has become an industrial empire; there is no reason to believe that the same fate may not be reserved for Sinkiang and Mongolia. The wheat and cattle of Kazakhstan are important to the Soviet Union, but the nonferrous metals which are being mined there in abundance are probably even more important. The exploration of these areas did not come about gradually, but quite suddenly, with the emigration of millions upon millions of people from the Western areas of Russia, with the result that Central Soviet Asia has been opened out far more quickly than the corresponding states of America. Almost by definition these republics will be possessed

<sup>1</sup> See an informative article by Paul Wohl in the *Christian Science Monitor*, for Feb. 3, 1950.

of a dynamic which forces them to push outward toward Persia and China. Mongolia is no longer within the orbit of Chinese power. The republic of Tannu Tuva no longer controls its own destiny but has been incorporated bodily within the Soviet Union. If the Urals are, as the Russians say, "the iron spine of the Soviet Union," it may well be that Soviet Turkistan will become its "iron heart," for the prodigious wealth of these territories is so much greater than the wealth elsewhere in the Soviet Union. It is here that the danger resides; and the untapped wealth of Tibet must always be attractive to those on its borders. Tibet has no common frontier with Russia, for it is separated from Russia by the width of Sinkiang, but trade from northwestern Tibet will be directed toward Russia through Khotan and Kashgar. Inevitably, if the Chinese conquer Tibet, the first fruits of the conquest will go to Russian minerologists. The Russians have opened out the Far Eastern Territories and made them productive, even though it has necessitated placing immense areas under the supervision of the secret police, and bringing intolerable hardship to the prisoners sent there, but the experience gained in these areas where the soil is perpetually frozen can be put to advantage in Tibet. The days of the monks are probably nearly over. When the Potala at Lhasa becomes a Communist university, it will simply be fulfilling the destiny which Stalin or Mao Tse-tung has marked out for it. We may still see the Tibetans flying a flag like the flag which Kim Il Sung designed for northern Korea: a white powerhouse on a blue ground below a red star.

The Tibetans are perfectly conscious of the fate which awaits them if and when the Communists take over their territory. When Chu Teh, the commander in chief of the Chinese Communist Army, issued an order of the day proclaiming that the Red armies "will do their utmost for the liberation of Tibet without delay," the hand-cranked Lhasa radio replied: "It is not the people they want to liberate. They want the country which will be so valuable to them. The Tibetan people are to be their slaves. They are to provide labor to work the fabulous mines and mineral wealth of Tibet which have never been explored." In a very real sense the Tibetan radio had achieved an adequate reply, but the mere fact that there was a radio in Lhasa at all suggested that the threatened invasion had become inevitable: to combat industrialization the Tibetans were employ-

ing a product of industrialism. In a very real sense the Chinese commander in chief had also spoken the truth, for the purpose of the invasion was not to liberate the Tibetans but to liberate their land, and since half the revenue of Tibet goes to the upkeep of the monasteries, he might have added that the purpose of the liberation was to liberate the revenue.

On what rational basis the Chinese Communists hope to liberate Tibet is probably unknown. In the past the Chinese have desired the possession of Tibet largely for religious reasons and for reasons of prestige. The army of the Manchu emperor was overthrown in 1912, and since then Chinese power over Tibet has never been more than nominal. The Tibetans speak a wholly different language from the Chinese, have different customs, and possess a profoundly different mode of worship. Un-Chinese in language and tradition, determined to remain free, signatories to the Simla Agreement, which was ratified by Britain and Tibet but not by China—the agreement gave complete autonomy to the Tibetans—they are now at the mercy of forces beyond their control. When Chien Lung drew Tibet within the orbit of the Chinese Empire in 1720, he did so at a moment when Tibet was shaken with internal dissensions. The violent upheavals of that time have passed, but it would be a mistake to regard Tibet as a country existing in a state of permanent political calm. There have been bitter quarrels within Lhasa itself. The two monasteries of Sera and Drepung, which lie at the base of the Potala cliffs, have opposed the claims of the Panchen Lama who resides at the Kundeling monastery, which is also in Lhasa. The Panchen Lama is the spiritual head of the church and therefore of equal stature to the Dalai Lama. Confusion has been worse confounded by the Chinese insistence that another Panchen Lama, now in the Kumbun monastery in Sinkiang, is the rightful occupant of the throne; and though the Tibetan Government offered to allow the Kumbun Lama to enter Lhasa, they refused him permission to enter with a guard of Red troops. The Tibetan Army of 8,000 foot soldiers armed with rifles and machine guns is untrained and obviously no match for the Chinese Red Army.

The decision to conquer Tibet has its origins deep within the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-shek had insisted in *China's Destiny* that Tibet belonged to China, and he established at Peipei, forty miles

from the wartime capital of Chungking, a monastery for the training of young Chinese Buddhists in lamaism. Here the students were taught Tibetan and prepared for the day when they could be sent to Tibet with the purpose of converting the Tibetans to the acceptance of peaceful penetration by the Chinese. This strange and beautiful monastery, high up on the cliffs of the Chialing gorges, was in fact a weapon of Kuomintang imperialism even though it was under the direction of Abbot T'ai Hsu, the highest Buddhist dignitary in China. When in July, 1949, the Tibetan Government solemnly demanded that the Chinese *ambans*, the representatives of the Chinese Government then living in Lhasa, leave the country, they had not reckoned with the continuity of Chinese imperial history. They had hoped that with the defeat of Kuomintang armies, Kuomintang imperialism would be at an end, but as soon as the Red armies reached the Tibetan frontier the old, familiar demand for Chinese suzerainty was heard.

Already the Chinese Communists occupy the frontier regions of Kumbun, Jeyekundo, Derge, Litang, and Batang, where Tibetans are numerous. The Chinese Communists have considerable experience of Tibetans, and one factor usually not reckoned with is Chu Teh's personal interest in Tibet, which dates from his first early wanderings along its frontiers, long before the Long March, while during the Long March itself he deliberately stayed for a whole year in the neighborhood of Tibet. To crown his career the conquest of Tibet might seem almost a necessary accomplishment. The conquest could take place as the result of the massed invasion of trained armies, or by sending partisans from among the Tibetans who live outside Tibet, or simply by sapping the country from within, but that Chu Teh desires the conquest is not in doubt. The risks are small, and the imagined benefits stupendously large.

There are also dangers. The experience of Sinkiang, where the frontier regions are controlled by the Russians, might very well be repeated. Sinkiang, which is twice as large as Texas and populated by the same races which populate Russian Turkistan, has been the scene of eight revolts since 1920. Soviet penetration in Sinkiang has been almost continual since 1923, and it has continued even after the establishment of the Chinese People's Government, for one of the demands made upon Mao Tse-tung in Moscow was that in the



strategic border area there should be established an economic partnership for the joint exploitation of coal, oil, gas, and nonferrous minerals together with the joint operation of the provincial airline and the orientation of trade toward the Soviet Union. The importance attached to this area became widely known when the Moscow discussions were held up for the arrival of a delegation from Sinkiang, which included Bor Han, the German-educated Tartar, who was deputy governor of the province under the Kuomintang and later became governor under the Communists with the title of Chairman of the Sinkiang People's Provincial Government. But though Russian pressure is continual, it is doubtful whether Sinkiang has been wholly transformed into a Communist province. In August, 1950, Bor Han complained about the general indifference to Communism within the province, and urged the Peiping Government "to strengthen its measures for unification of ideological trends." He declared:

Since the liberation, political and economic unification has gradually been achieved between the three areas of Ili, Tacheng and Ashan on the one hand and the areas of Tihwa, Hami, Yenki, Aksu, Kashgar, Khotan and Yarkand on the other, but due to the long period of isolation in the past the present unity is not as yet fully established. There is still an inadequate unanimity in ideological trends and working attitudes of government cadres in all areas.<sup>2</sup>

Translated into less recondite terms, the statement said that the province was simmering with rebellion. It could hardly be otherwise. Enormous pressures had been placed on the province by the Russians, and the Chinese have been making desperate efforts to keep it within their control. Following the revolt of Turki tribesmen in 1944, the Russians had instituted an East Turkistan Autonomous Republic. The revolutionaries were supplied with Russian equipment and occupied most of the north of the province, and they were still in occupation when the Chinese Communist armies came into Sinkiang from the east. But when Bor Han wrote to Peiping, declaring that "the broad masses were not yet sufficiently mobilized" and "bandit suppression" would still be an important task in the future, he was hinting that the rebels who were once inspired and assisted

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1950.

by Russia were still dangerous. It was not perhaps that they were still being assisted by Russia; it was very possible that rebellion had become a habit. For the smooth functioning of Sinkiang there was need of something more than signed pledges between the rebels who formed the old East Turkistan Autonomous Republic and their new Chinese Communist masters. The important trade routes through the province could be endangered, and the gateway between China and Soviet Central Asia could become a new battleground. How importantly Sinkiang is regarded by Stalin became known when he sent his brother-in-law on a tour of inspection at a time when the province was almost wholly under Russian influence; and Svanidze's careful report, written in 1937, looked forward to the complete reconstruction of the province and its domination by the Soviets. At the time he was writing, the domination was already a fact. The students were being trained at Tashkent; the government services were infiltrated by men who possessed Soviet passports and had sworn allegiance to Soviet Russia; and a complicated game of subterfuge was being played with the official Kuomintang representative General Sheng Shih-tsai, who was cleverly placed in a position where after a nominal rule lasting twelve years he could no longer exert authority either on behalf of the Russians or on behalf of the Kuomintang, and he was recalled in 1943 in disgrace to Chungking.

At about the time that Stalin sent his brother-in-law to Sinkiang with instructions to invent a mechanical blueprint for the swift taking over of the province, Mao Tse-tung sent his brother into Sinkiang as the chief Chinese Communist commissioner. Little is known of his stay there, but it is significant that he was murdered by Turki tribesmen in 1942, and there is some reason for believing that the tribesmen acted under orders from the Soviet Union.

The borderlands of China and the Soviet Union are no longer theoretically under dispute. The Soviet Union has renounced the sphere of interest it had established in Manchuria in 1945. When at the Moscow Conference Mao Tse-tung conceded the independence from China of the Mongolian People's Republic, he was only conceding a territory already lost to China, for the Mongolian People's Republic had become a part of the Soviet Union ever since the Protocol of Mutual Assistance was signed in March, 1936, and

Marshal Choibalsan's loyalty to the Soviet Union has never been questioned. The Mongols do not speak Chinese and belong to a totally different race, but they are at least more akin to the Chinese than they are to the Great Russians. Here, too, Russian imperialism appears to have overstepped reasonable limits, for if a real friendship between Communist China and the Soviet Union had been desired, Mongolia could have been detached from the Soviet Union and placed within the Chinese orbit. There was, in fact, nothing in the agreement signed by Mao Tse-tung and Stalin in Moscow which suggested that Russia had abandoned its aim of national expansion toward the East. For a while the expansion was halted, but in Sinkiang there were signs that friction remained. The old issues were still at work, the old flames were still burning, though slowly. The Russians, "keeping what they seem to give away and destroying what they appear to embrace," were to remain for the Chinese Communists uncomfortable neighbors.

In 1938, long before Soviet Central Asia had acquired the prominence it was to acquire later, Stalin spoke of the Kirghiz Republic, where the people belong to the same strain as the inhabitants of Sinkiang, and explained their special responsibility. He said:

Kirghizia, leaning in part on Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang) and in part overlooking the Hindu Kush into great Hindustan, occupies a specially important position from the point of view of the propagation of Soviet ideas in the East. The task of the Kirghizian workers consists in having to attract the toiling masses of the country into administration, to assist in establishing national economy, to strengthen the Soviets, improve methods of government, raise the level of national culture, make Soviet power close and dear to the people and thus show the neighbouring nations in practice the superiority of the Soviet system over the patriarchal, feudal and bourgeois.<sup>3</sup>

It was a statement which could evidently have applied to all of Soviet Turkistan and to all those areas which "overlook the Hindu Kush into great Hindustan." The threat would remain as long as the neighboring countries failed to put their houses in order, for clearly

<sup>3</sup> *Pravda*, Moscow, May 11, 1938. Quoted from Raymond Arthur Davies and Andrew J. Steiger, *Soviet Asia* (New York, Dial Press, Inc., 1942), p. 169. Copyright, 1942, by Dial Press, Inc.

the peasants in Iran, Afghanistan, and India were malleable material for the Soviet experiment. The danger lay not in the example of the industrialization of the provinces of Soviet Central Asia, for there was indeed much to be learned from there. The danger lay in the revolutionary nihilism which the Russians have shown only too frequently.

There is a song sung by the Soviet poet Jambaev concerning an immortal magician called Korkut who once inhabited Kazakhstan. Cursed by Allah for his sins, he was condemned to wander forever through the land, never resting or at peace with himself. If he tried to rest, he saw in front of him an open grave. Something very similar to this has been witnessed in modern Russia. Whole empires of Europe have been conquered by the Russians; now they turn toward the East. China has fallen to the Chinese Communists and is therefore beyond their reach, but India remains in the south and Afghanistan and Persia lie within easy reach. It is doubtful if Soviet dynamism can ever stop of its own accord: it must go on, eternally restless, for fear of seeing the open grave.

## XII

### The Inextinguishable Flame

Do I dream? Man avoid man? And in danger-time, too.

—HERMAN MELVILLE, *The Lightning-Rod Man*

WE HAVE seen how the explosive revolt of the summer and autumn of 1945 has evolved in Asia according to a well defined plan. In every Asiatic country there occurred revolts on three levels: national, political, and social, and all of them were directed toward increasing the potential power of the Asiatics in a world which, until recently, had accepted the fact that power resided mainly in the West. The forces at work in 1945 are still at work; the political parties which seized power are still in power, but only on condition that they did actually fight, did actually employ their whole powers, did infuse their members with a sense of consuming responsibility. Those parties which failed to find roots among the people failed to retain their power, or they remained in power only with the evident backing of foreign armor.

A revolt of formidable proportions occurred throughout Asia, and for a brief while there was a chance that it would be channelized in the direction of a liberal "third force." Increasingly, over the years, the revolt has acquired an authoritarian temper.

We need to examine why it is that the drift toward Communism has occurred in Asia. It is not that Communism offers Asia more than the West: it is simply that the West failed to offer *on human and social terms* the advantages offered by Communism. Indeed,

the West was rarely interested in the human and social terms of the equation. Frightened by the explosion, incapable of understanding its nature, tending to regard the Asiatics as peoples of minor importance who could never influence the course of world history, the Western powers concentrated upon continuing a traditional concept of colonialism, with such few changes as opportunity or diplomacy suggested. This was their crime. They possessed no mythology comparable to the Communist mythology. They did not realize that the war had solved no problems, and that the peace would be a disaster unless the people of the world could be buoyed up by a common mythology, a common belief in the possibilities of life in human and social terms. The Soviet Union stated loudly and uncompromisingly that it had been chosen by God or by a mechanistic destiny to lead the dispossessed races of the earth into their inheritance, and people believed them, because no one else offered a comparable dynamism. There is no reason to believe that the Asiatic peasants would not have accepted the leadership of the Western powers if it had come in time. All they knew about the West was that it had sent soldiers to help them fight against the Japanese over a long period of time, and not at the last fractional moment. The fact that the West did not appeal to them in words they could understand was an error so great that the whole course of the relationship between Asia and the West for hundreds of years may have been decided during the years 1946-1947 by ignorant men in America and Europe who, by doing nothing constructive, allowed others to step into the breach.

What was the cause of this error? It seems to have been a lack of ordinary human sympathy and an aversion to revolutions, however they occurred. Except in rare cases we neither sympathized with, nor attempted to understand, the huge volcanic forces released at the end of the war. There was little enough understanding of these forces in the Soviet Union, yet they were able to capitalize on Western misunderstanding. Ho Chih-minh's Viet-Minh government was not a purely Communist government in 1946; we have forced it to become one by leaning to the side of a government which has almost no representation among the people. We armed Chiang Kai-shek, with the result that the Chinese peasants captured the arms and gave them to the Chinese Communists, who more closely represented them. The government of Syngman Rhee had no mandate

to rule South Korea and had been defeated in elections only a few weeks before war broke out, yet it continued to rule and we continued to regard it as representative of the people who had disowned it; and during the war we made no effort to suggest that South Korea deserved a better government, a better distribution of income, a whole social revolution. The Government of North Korea was a dictatorship imposed by force, but this did not excuse us from the responsibility of seeing that South Korea was ruled well. In the Philippines we allowed a corrupt government to rule untrammelled, with the result that in five years the Hukbalahaps increased five times in numbers. So it was in other governments of the Far East. Blindly, as though impelled by fatal forces, we assisted the reaction and paid no regard to the revolutionary peasants, who numbered 80 per cent of the total population of the East.

There are occasions in history when whole nations are called upon to make confession.

In his Monterey speech on April 20, 1943, President Roosevelt said: "We know that the day of the exploitation of the resources and the people of one country for the benefit of any group in another country is definitely over." But when the war came to an end, exploitation remained. It was not necessarily or inevitably exploitation by the Western powers; but the Western powers allowed the reaction in many countries to proceed unhindered, they approved of governments which possessed no basis of representation among the people, and they forgot the responsibility which devolved on them once they had announced the Four Freedoms. These were cardinal errors. We are now paying for these errors in blood, and we may continue to pay for them for many years. *We need to realize how deep-rooted are the changes which have taken place in Asia in the short period of five years; it is as though centuries of revolution had passed by, as though Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the American, French, and Russian revolutions had all taken place on Asiatic soil within a period no longer than the length of the war.* The strains to which Asiatic countries have been submitted are prodigious. In Kunming in 1945 students posted the American Declaration of Independence upon the walls of remote Yunnanese villages; within a few months they were making their way to Yenan; a few months later, seeing an enemy equipped with American weapons, they joined in

the prevailing hymn of hate against America. To suggest that they acted in this way because a propaganda machine had successfully indoctrined them is to underestimate their significance. By sending vast stores of military equipment to Chiang Kai-shek, we made it inevitable that the students should behave in this way. In China we did not consult the opinions of the students and the peasants: we consulted men like T. V. Soong, who acquired immense wealth abroad, and then, when they were called upon to return to the party which brought them to power and accept the responsibilities of defeat, surrendered their honor by remaining abroad and living on their unearned wealth. To have consulted and confided in men so unrepresentative suggests a fatal blindness. He did not represent China; he represented only himself. We had no business trusting him from the beginning. The revolt of Asia did not pass through such men; it brushed past them and thrust them aside, as though they were, as indeed we now know they are, of little account.

The Asiatic revolt, in so far as it was a revolt against Western imperialism, has been won. We do not know yet, and we can barely envisage, the social forms which this revolution will produce, but it is extremely necessary that we should attempt to form a general picture of these social forms as they emerge, for the second stage of the revolution involves a deliberate attempt to shape society according to theoretical patterns. The social patterns of Asia are still fluid, and therefore can be changed. Entirely new emphases are now placed on production, religion, ownership, transport, and the exchange of labor for goods or cash; and in the minds of millions there are entirely new emphases on the meaning of life and death. Whole industries and whole professions have been destroyed: new industries and new professions emerge. The student and the trade-union leader, neither of whom has enjoyed power in Asia in the past, now assume a quite extraordinary preponderance of power. People are beginning to live for the community rather than for their close-knit family units, and though the family still represents the ultimate social unit, its power is broken. And all through the revolutionary states of Asia there is emerging a new concept of man.

None of these things have been studied with the care and precision needed at this time. The revolt of Asia mirrors the explosions which are taking place in the minds of the Asiatics. They have



decided that they will not live under the dominance of Western powers, but they have not yet determined under what dominance they will live. The social patterns therefore remain unstable, but they may change very quickly, even in countries where there are strong stable and central governments. For the Asiatic it is a time of restless change and experiment; and these continual experiments are just as evident in continental China, where Communist power is centralized in the hard core of a seven-man junta, as in Indonesia, where power is more often delegated. The Chinese Communists, for example, have decided against the expropriation of the kulak class, and land reform largely consists of the division of the land among the landless peasantry, while the landlords are allowed an equal share with the rest. In Asia Communism has not become stereotyped and bureaucratized as it has in the Soviet Union. And the normal restlessness of the Asiatic now has full play.

But here, as elsewhere, there are unsuspected dangers. At the end of the Pacific war, Asia was in ferment. It was a time when the revolutionaries were in the saddle, when the wildest dreams seemed possible to the young nationalists who had dipped into Marx and read the American Declaration of Independence, and thought they saw in the marriage of complete independence and revolutionary socialism the answer to all their prayers. It has not turned out exactly as they had foreseen.

In four years the faces of China, India, and Indonesia have been completely changed. On the surface three immense power areas, containing a population which amounts to nearly two-fifths of all the inhabitants of the globe, have been established under stable governments. Seemingly, the time of the revolutionaries is nearly over, and that of the bureaucratic consolidators of the revolution has begun.

If it were as simple as this, there would be nothing for the Asiatic to fear. Unfortunately for him, it is not quite so simple. The revolutionaries are still there, and their continued presence is a threat to the governments they have brought into power. It is an axiom that the revolutionary storm troopers will always oppose an established bureaucracy. The second phase of the Asiatic revolt, as of all revolutions, includes a war to the death between the storm troopers and the bureaucracy.

When Mao Tse-tung admitted on June 6, 1950, that 400,000 rebels were fighting the Red Army in South China and would have to be smoked out of their caves and hill fortresses, he was speaking in the language that Chiang Kai-shek employed against the Red Army when it was established in Shensi. But it is unlikely that these rebels can be destroyed with any ease. Probably very few of them are active followers of the Kuomintang régime: they are the dissidents of the revolution, those who revolt against the revolution, and who would revolt against any revolution, however it declared itself, either because they have not received the advantages they thought would accrue to them or because they possessed the traditional Oriental contempt for any authority except that which springs directly from the village councils. These revolts are not only to be found in China. The sporadic revolts in Indonesia are of the same kind; and like the revolts in South China and similar revolts in Madura in South India, they tend to break out on the peripheries of government power.

These revolts are inevitable, and they are inevitably suppressed with violence; yet their suppression does little to change the situation, and every new revolt tends to weaken governmental power. A state of civil war continually threatens the new revolutionary states in Asia, and will continue to threaten them unless or until an external enemy can be found. The apparent stability we see in the new Asiatic governments conceals a nihilist chaos close to the surface; Burma is only the extreme example of a tendency which is manifest throughout Asia.

All of these are desperate problems to be solved quickly, unless almost unbearable strains are to result. Only one thing remains relatively certain: there must be a radical solution of the agrarian problem. Upon this depends both the kind and the degree of control that the governments in power can exert. If they fail to cope effectively with land reform, the nihilist chaos will rise closer to the surface.

We should be on our guard against the possibilities of chaos in Asia. The revolt against the West has been won, but the revolt against the archaic past, against the landowners, and against bureaucratic power has failed in nearly all the countries of the Far East, with the result that the peasants in many Oriental countries remain dissidents, tending to obey their village councils more than they

obey the government, finding no solution of their pressing problems in the endless demands of bureaucracy. Even in China, where agrarian reform has been practiced to an extent unknown elsewhere, the division of the land among the peasants has not been quick enough, or managed well enough, to leave the peasant content with his lot. Liu Shao-chi's urgent demand that agrarian reform take place speedily, "or else we shall fail," suggests some of the strains the Chinese peasants are suffering. The peasant, tending his fields and thinking of little else but the ownership of his land, will probably remain a disintegrating and centrifugal force until he has a radio in his hut, and then finds himself, like the New England farmer who listens attentively to the broadcasts of the Bureau of Agriculture, so deeply indebted to the government for its freely given advice on agricultural problems that he is prepared to regard himself as part of a much larger community. But that time has not come in Asia. In spite of all that has been done in Asia for the peasant, he is not yet integrated into the new revolutionary social structure. His traditional horror of government remains. From time immemorial he has regarded his village council as the ultimate repository of power, and he has paid taxes to the central government only when overawed by superior armed force.

In theory Sun Yat-sen and Mao Tse-tung were both prepared to allow the village councils almost complete powers; the village *hsien* was the prime political unit. But what happens when the Chinese Communists, who have accepted the *hsien* principle, coordinate the villages through a vast, complex, and overriding system of bureaucratic control? The Russian Communists did not solve the age-old conflict between the fields and the towns by giving primacy to the urbanized proletariat. Marx never faced the problems raised by this conflict, and indeed the *Communist Manifesto*, with its contemptuous references to the peasantry, can have little application to Asia. It is unthinkable that the primacy of the urban proletariat can be maintained in Asia, where the proletariat form so small a proportion of the whole. Yet if there is no solution of the agrarian problem, and if the subsistence level of the peasants is not raised, peasant wars against the central governments are only too likely to occur, and they will occur even when the chances of success are very small. These wars may, indeed, be very costly, for there are enough power-

hungry revolutionaries left behind in the wake of the national revolutions to help to fan the flames.

Like nearly all revolutions in the past, the revolution in the Far East suffers from a tendency to disintegrate. It is not only that the nihilist chaos is near the surface, but it is also continually seeking to break through. How close the nihilist chaos can be may be seen by appraising the Burmese revolution.

In September, 1948, nine months after taking over full power from the British, the prime minister, Thakin Nu, tabled the following proposal to his cabinet: "In view of the chaotic situation in which we now find ourselves, is it your desire that the government itself should go underground?"

The proposal was defeated by the margin of one vote. There was nothing in the least ridiculous in Thakin Nu's suggestion; it is even possible that over a long period his government might have been in a stronger position if it *had* gone underground, for the romantic conception of secret government is widespread in Asia, where secrecy still inspires respect. Thakin Nu was faced with five separate conspiracies: a revolt of the Karens in the north, the revolt of the Red and White Flags in the south, and two other splinter groups; and most of these were fighting less for revolutionary principles than for maintenance of an anarchic independence, accepting the national revolution as a *fait accompli*, while opposing the emerging shape of the second stage of the revolution and all its revolutionary social implications. Among them also were those who were not so much dissidents as people who revolted for the sake of revolt and for the sake of loot. Under those circumstances Thakin Nu could maintain a government housed behind barbed wire in Rangoon, a government that was essentially localized, or he could spread his government secretly all over Burma. He chose to remain for excellent but debatable reasons behind the barbed-wire fences. The Chinese Communists at Yen-an did exactly the contrary. They decentralized government and spread it far and wide, and while the caves of Yen-an acquired tremendous prestige, there was no particular reason why the Communist leaders should stay there in permanent residence; in fact they frequently saddled their ponies and wandered out into obscure areas near the fighting lines where no one expected them, and where they were just as powerful as they

were before, since they were in touch with each other by radio. Thakin Nu remained in Rangoon largely because he had long ago accepted the British conception of "the reign of law," and saw in the government buildings in Rangoon the actual symbols of the power of government. If the buildings had been captured, the rebels who captured them would be in a position to claim that government had fallen into their hands.

These aspects of the Asiatic situation deserve to be commented upon. They are generally overlooked, but nothing could be more dangerous. Power does not express itself in the East as it does in the West. Social power is more fluid, autocratic power more concentrated. Symbols and symbolic acts in the East have enormous consequences. Oriental words have resonances and overtones which are often completely lacking when they are translated into Western languages. We must learn to know these differences if we are to understand the course of events in Asia. There is no clear-cut battle between Communism and American imperialism on the battleground of Asia, and the Communists themselves made their gravest mistakes when they simplified the issue. And above all, overriding all our other preoccupations when we face the dangerous problems which are now being raised throughout Asia, there should be a concerted attempt to understand the mentality of the Asiatic peasant. We should understand, for example, why the Indonesian Republican Government never possessed greater effective power in the eyes of the Indonesians than when its every member was imprisoned by the Dutch on the island of Bangka. We should also understand why it is eminently possible that there will be sporadic civil wars and uprisings in Indonesia, India, and China for many years to come. There are complexities in the Asiatic political scene which have nothing in common with our own. We tend to see the social forms and politics of Asia in terms of Western concepts, and nothing could be more mistaken.

For many years longer we must learn to see Asia, not through the eyes of the representatives sent to United Nations conferences or to embassies, but through the eyes of the peasants themselves. The representatives of Asia are too often out of touch with the peasants, who regard the autonomy of their village communes as the greatest prize. The Asiatic peasant wants the village commune to administer

itself. He will continue to fight off, wherever he can, the inroads of the state, unless the state can prove that it offers benefits unobtainable elsewhere, and the state can only offer these benefits when it is in direct touch with the peasants. When Lenin in the early stages of the Russian Revolution proclaimed the immediate need for "the electrification of the Soviet Union," he was proclaiming a need which meant comparatively little to the Russian peasants, for their labor in the fields had little enough to do with electric light. But when Mao Tse-tung demanded radios in all the Chinese villages in 1949, he was stating the case for direct communication between the villages and the central authority: with radios he could hope to bring the revolutionary impetus to the villagers; without them he may fail. Radio may be used as a weapon to enforce unanimity upon the villagers, but at least the villager, having heard directly from Peking what taxes he should pay, will not be at the mercy of local tax collectors. Radio works both ways. With a pedal-operated transmitter, such as the Chinese Communist headquarters employed in Yen-an, the peasant will be able to make direct appeals to the central authority. His dislike of authority will probably remain, but he will come to know far more about the workings of authority. There is a very real sense in which the second stage of the Asiatic revolt—the social revolution—depends upon radio.

Radio, of course, offers other benefits to the Asiatic peasant. Undreamed-of sources of information are opened out to him. He tends to live in his village and for his village; with radio he comes immediately in contact with villages far removed from his own experience and thereby achieves a sense of unity with other peasants, no longer regarding them as foreigners because they live fifty miles away. Though radio will tend to impose a uniform culture on the villages, it will also be used to create diversity of cultural interests. Nor is radio employed in Asia in a way comparable to its use in the West. The Tehran radio every morning opens with a long recital from the *Shah Namah*, the epic poem concerning the Persian kings. A great deal of Gandhi's spiritual empire over the Hindus was derived from the fact that his prayers and sermons were broadcast. The Jakarta radio broadcasts chapters from the Koran. Already in China the "three or four socialist textbooks" which Mao Tse-tung referred to in his speech of June 8, 1950, as essential documents to

be studied by all Chinese have been broadcast in full for the benefit of copyists in remote areas. Finally, radio possesses one advantage which may well outweigh all the others. In countries like China, where illiteracy must remain for a long while an almost insoluble problem, radio resolves the problem by simply denying the need for literacy, for the peasant can get along well enough with the spoken word: if he needs grain, he may simply broadcast for it; if he desires to write a letter, he can broadcast it instead. In September, 1932, the Chinese Communists captured their first transmitter. It was their greatest prize, to be defended at all costs; and the lessons learned in the Kiangsi soviets have not been forgotten.

But though the radio is a force of enormous potential power in Asia, the peasants are not likely to accept it without some misgivings. The radio will destroy the power of the village council. It cannot do less and it may conceivably do more, for it is in the power of radio to bring about the uniformity of bureaucratic control which has had a deadening effect on the Russians. If taxes must be collected, the peasants of the past have demanded that the village council assess and collect the taxes. The impersonal voice on the radio will demand other solutions. If military forces must be raised, the peasant demands that the council should be empowered to do it, and wherever possible he will insist that the council see to it that the soldiers are kept in the neighborhood. The impersonal voice on the radio will demand its quota, and against the voice only the appeals of hundreds of villages are effective. The dangers of radio become greatest in authoritarian single-party governments. If no opposition is allowed on the air, the peasant must suffer in silence the endless disquisitions on a single theme until by dint of repetition he comes to believe everything he hears on the radio. It is a trap for which he has no ready means of escape, and all his past experience makes him ill prepared for it. There remains one temporary safeguard. The peasants throughout Asia are by nature and tradition anarchists. They have not learned to respect authority; they are suspicious of all orders which come from above, just as they are suspicious of ballot boxes. The will of the village elder remains, though in China the elder may take the form of a youth delegated to fulfill this function by the central authority. Underneath all the accretions of recent years, the ancient traditional forms persist.

In Burma, Indonesia, and China, and more recently in India, villages have declared their independence. It is useless to smile and say that they are behind the times. There are many villages and towns and even states in the West which would declare their independence if they dared.

Unless the peasants have reasonable security of tenure within the state, unless the state assists the small cultivator and lifts his standard of living, there will always be a tendency toward disintegration in the village communities, whether there is radio or not. Ultimate political decisions do not rest with governments in the East. They depend upon the decisions of millions of village councils spread out over the length and breadth of Asia. It was for this reason that Mao Tse-tung climbed so speedily to power: his sources of information were so numerous that he was able to assess the decisions of innumerable village councils and act accordingly. When he came to power, he made a special plea over the Peking radio, demanding that everyone partaking in these councils should be allowed free speech. "We shall not know what is on men's minds unless they discuss their problems freely," he said, adding a rider that those who were punished for speaking freely did not deserve punishment. "It is a crime against the state for anyone to prohibit free discussion unless the discussion is deliberately malevolent." There is no reason to disbelieve that he meant what he said, for it was a statement which he had repeated a countless number of times before. It is inconceivable that Stalin should ever speak in this way. This is only one more of the differences which divide Asiatic from Russian Communism. Asiatic Communism must deal with problems which do not and cannot arise within the Soviet Union.

Within fifty or a hundred years the ancient traditions of the East will have perished. They are falling fast. The sultans of Indonesia and the princes of India have been dispossessed. For a brief while they will retain their titles, and then even these will disappear. *Adat*, the customary law of Indonesia, is being exchanged for a legal code which, if it owes much to Mohammedan law and still more to Roman law, comes closer to the needs of the Indonesian people *as a whole*. Tractors will change the pattern of their agriculture, and weather forecasts received by radio will have a greater validity than the prayers to the gods. The unseen gods, however, remain in the



shape of the impersonal voices coming over the radio, and we can expect to see desperate efforts made to give theological validity to the facts of modern science. The Oriental peasant is deeply religious, and if the advance of modern technology deprives him for a reason to believe in the old gods, he will seek new ones. It is not so certain that he will find them to his liking.

These matters are not unimportant. We tend to think of Asia in terms of the military power of the emerging states, and it is necessary that we should do so; but we shall not understand them unless we understand the forces that move the mind of the peasant, his deep-rooted desire for land, and his need for religious sanctions. For a while, during the period when he is fighting for his independence, he will have no need for religious sanctions. Later, they will become more and more necessary. The danger lies precisely here, for over large parts of Asia already the religious sanction is supplied in the shape of the all-seeing father or savior, the Communist god who sits in the Kremlin and shapes the destinies of nations with a turn of his wheel or a stroke of his pen. It may be that in the absence of any other religious symbol the father-image will come to dominate Asia. If it does, the game is up: the Asiatic peasant, with his desperate desire for security in a relentlessly changing world, his own gods no longer sufficiently powerful to protect him, may accept even a Russian god as the divine protector in the same way that the Chinese over long periods of their history accepted an Indian god, though they deprived Buddha of one of his attributes and gave him the classical features of a Chinese prince, and still later changed him into a princess under the name of Kuan Yin.

I am anxious not to be misunderstood. A brutal war is being fought throughout Asia for the conquest of men's minds. It is this war which should concern us. The physical conquest of lands is a temporary thing: the conquest of minds is permanent, or at least leaves lasting traces, and these traces are fraught with enormous consequences. In nearly all respects America has failed in the effort to conquer the minds of the Asiatics, and the Russians have succeeded to an unparalleled extent largely because they possessed in the figure of Stalin a father-image possessing apparently divine powers. Also, they demanded that the Communist devotees should live hard; they offered a vision of a future world commonwealth in

the possession of the toilers, a commonwealth which would be achieved only by immense sacrifices, and they also offered legends and a secret ritual and mysterious passwords and a new Bible. Finally, they had worked out precise objectives to be reached according to a timetable. The Americans have offered the Asiatics none of these things; the Four Freedoms, which might have succeeded in swinging the Asiatics to the side of America, were seen by the Asiatic to be little more than symbolic gestures without any real content.

The tragedy lies here: America had much to offer the East in terms of material necessities; but lacking any well considered objectives in the East, with no precise aims other than the containment of Soviet power (and even this aim was never thought out to its logical conclusions), America failed to reach any understanding with the Asiatic peasant and continually thwarted them by refusing assent to their demands. They demanded agrarian reform and the breaking up of the large estates. In the two countries, Korea and Japan, where it was in the power of the Americans to introduce new and revolutionary concepts of land tenure, the progress of the reforms was so halfhearted that the peasant could tell himself with some truth that he would be in a stronger position under a Communist régime. The speed with which the North Koreans introduced land reform in their march across South Korea was an indication that they had fully realized the implicit demand of the peasants. Faced with the choice between an undefined freedom and an acre of land, the peasant will choose the acre of land, even though in the long run he may lose more by his choice than he would have lost if he had chosen freedom. Freedom can mean little to the Asiatic peasant, who is the prisoner of the seasons. He may, and probably will, strive for greater freedoms once he has a piece of land, but it is unfair to assume that freedom of itself has any attractions for him; and since the Communists from the time of Lenin have employed the word "democracy" to mean its precise opposite, they are bemused when the Americans speak of it as their particular offering to the East.

How, then, should American power be exerted? Clearly it cannot be exerted in the ways followed in the past. An entirely new and imaginative conception of America's relationship toward Asia is

needed. America still has a part to play, though her power and prestige have never been lower. In August, 1945, she could have led the whole Asiatic revolt. It was in her power to direct and channelize the vast movements for independence and social reform, but by a tragic misconception of her historical role America found herself assisting both those who opposed social reform and those who opposed the revolt. It was a tragedy which need not have happened, and should never have happened; and it was only because America failed to assume the role clearly marked out for her that the Soviet Union was able to maneuver herself into an extraordinary position of dominance.

— Today, in spite of the prodigious sacrifice of American blood in Korea, America in the eyes of the Asiatics is largely a power vacuum. They regard America as an overrich contented country which has lost its youth and acquired the somnolent habits of old age. Its Asiatic policy is seen to be pathetically weak, the policy of the most perfect indecision, limited to the rather helpless belief that Russian aggression can be permanently "contained." That the American State Department should have been protesting in December, 1949, both against the Kuomintang, which America had supported since the end of the war, and against the Chinese Communists, which she had done everything in her power to destroy, and found them equally silent concerning her protests, was an indication that her power in China was at vanishing point, for it could be exerted neither on the left nor on the right. The invasion of Southern Korea and the consequent landing of American troops has produced little to modify the statement, for Western power exerted on the mainland of Asia must always be weakened unless a social policy informs the occupying power. It is conceivable that America could win the war against northern Korea, but there is still no evidence to suggest that there exists anything but a rudimentary American social policy toward the Koreans; and the war won on the battlefield may be lost in the minds of the Koreans. We must realize that in the modern world, power to be effective must be armed with a social policy.

. What is needed—never more urgently than now—is a policy which is prepared to be imaginatively aggressive on the Asiatic mainland, an attempt toward leadership by America on all constructive levels. There can be no policy toward Asia which leaves the Asiatic peasant

out of account. There must be a clean break with the past, an effort toward an entirely new and daring revision and redirection of American influence in the Far East. It is not too late, but it is very nearly too late. *If all Asia turns against America, we may expect to see in our generation one out of every two Americans ploughed under. The stakes could not be higher, and the present situation is so charged with dangers that there must be the greatest temptation to seek simple solutions. Unfortunately, there are none, nor can there be, for the battle for the heart of Asia must be fought on all levels, on all conceivable battlefronts of the spirit.* To fight with weapons alone is to admit bankruptcy. What is needed is a body of doctrine of a constructive character, a new Manifesto to the Orient, a precise evaluation of the relationship existing between the huge industrial empire of America and the millions of small farming communities of Asia, who have heard of this mysterious country beyond the seas but have as yet no reason to believe that America has anything to offer them. Where do we stand? The Asiatic peasant simply does not know. And it is begging the question to say that propaganda over the radio already is being beamed all over the Far East from broadcasting stations in New York: very little of this propaganda has touched the peasant, and to most of this propaganda the Communists have already invented ready answers.

The two most successful of Communist revolutions in the Far East began with small groups of men wandering in the hills and border regions. Their resources were insignificant. They had no money, no radios, and their weapons were often home-made. When Mao Tse-tung led a thousand men up the slopes of Chingkanshan, a range of hills on the Kiangsi border, in the winter of 1927, his tattered columns possessed less than a hundred rifles among them, most of the men were barefoot, and their most precious possession—a printing press—had to be left behind. When Ho Chih-minh wandered secretly in the hills of northern Annam at intervals during the years 1932–1939, he was nearly always alone, and he was never known to employ bodyguards. While they were wandering, these revolutionary leaders already possessed vast and intangible powers over the peasantry; they were listened to with respect, and they in turn listened to the demands of the peasants. Their years of wandering comprised a long period in training and discipline, the training and discipline

necessary for a full understanding of the minds of the peasants. Without these they would not have come to power. "We cannot have a people's army unless we know the people," wrote Mao Tse-tung. By the same token Americans cannot hope to possess an empire over the hearts of the Asiatics if they remain permanently estranged from any real understanding of the Asiatic peasants.

*It may be that the rot has set in, that the whole of Western civilization must fall before the onslaught of the Communists; but it is not in the least necessary that this should happen, and it will happen only if the Americans, who represent the predominant power in the West, surrender to the fatal tendency of misunderstanding the natures of their enemies and their friends.* The experience of Korea has taught us that we knew considerably less about the Korean peasant than we thought we did. The massive and almost endless waves of young peasant soldiers who were often unarmed, and who were mown down by American machine-gun fire, were not moved only by the orders of their commanders. They had been taught by the political propaganda officers who accompanied them to the front lines that if the Americans remained in power in Korea, all the advantages of the agrarian revolution in northern Korea would be lost to them, and that they would once more come under the rule of the landlords and moneylenders. They were told that America was an imperialist power intent upon taking the place of Japan, which had held Korea in bondage for thirty-two years and left an ineradicable scar upon the Korean mind. So they fought desperately, believing the monumental lies they were taught because these lies contained half-truths. At least there had been no indication from Washington that agrarian reform, on the scale envisaged by the Communists, would ever be put into operation where American power could exert itself. The consequences of America's failure to support the social and agrarian revolutions in the Far East had already been demonstrated in China. What is surprising is that the war in Korea changed nothing in the American attitude: the war was seen to be the result of an act of deliberate aggression by the North Koreans, and nothing more. In fact, the war was also an admission of defeat on the part of the "People's Government of North Korea," for, unable to extend its authority by social means and by the force of example, it had resource to arms as a last resort.

It is perfectly conceivable that the North Koreans would have exerted a far greater influence on the south if hundreds of thousands of *unarmed* converts to Communism had rushed the frontiers and mingled with the people of the south, for there existed already a real desire for unification among the Korean people, and such an invasion would have produced conditions under which unification could have been brought about. In the name of revolutionary realism, the Communists must always resort to extralegal methods. They chose war. It does not immediately follow that their choice will produce the happiest results, and in fact their greatest successes have nearly always been achieved by comparatively peaceful means: the communization of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania, and Czechoslovakia did not involve the onslaught of whole armies, but arose as the result of clever and ruthless diplomacy and the fact that these countries were close to the Russian borders and could not be defended by the Western powers. When the Communists chose war, as in Greece and Azerbaijan, they failed.

It is for this reason that Americans should view with greater alarm the secret workings of Communism in Asia than its open manifestations. It is easy to understand a war, but it is infinitely more difficult to understand under what conditions an Asiatic peasant will embrace Communism, for the causes do not lie only in his perennial poverty: they lie far more cogently in his way of life. We should ask ourselves why the peasants in poverty-stricken Madura have suddenly decided to call themselves Communists and establish a Communist border region of their own, while Communism remains underground in Gujarat. We should ask ourselves, too, why the North Koreans thought themselves compelled to invade the south at the present time when by waiting a few more years they might have been able to take over South Korea without a war. These are not simple problems. They involve an understanding of the logic of national characters in the East, and a knowledge of the lengths to which the peasants will go in order to obtain their minimum demands. The armed Communists in Madura, like the armed Communists in Korea, know that the power resides not in the industrial proletariat but in the massed peasantry, and that no power on earth can prevent them from rising in their millions if their demands are not satisfied.

Unless America acts with speed and determination, and changes its whole policy toward Asia, it is likely that within the next two or three years the whole of Asia will fall to the Communists. There is very little to stop the Communists. They are planted in all Asiatic countries. They have resources which are denied to Americans. They do not need Russian tanks in order to conquer: whispers, slogans, the promise of reforms are enough. And just as it is extremely dangerous to denigrate Russian Communism, so it is equally dangerous to denigrate Asiatic Communism; we must learn to understand it before it is too late, why it arises, under what conditions it becomes powerful, and why in some regions, but not in others, it has been so astonishingly successful. It is in this sense that the constant stream of articles and publications pretending to demonstrate how American military power can offset the Communist advance in Asia is so dangerous, for the problem is not essentially a military problem at all.

We live or perish by the fact that millions of Asiatic peasants, who are still living in helpless poverty, demand their rights. They outnumber the West, and in the foreseeable future they will continue to outnumber us. We tend to regard ourselves as technologically superior to the Asiatic peasants, but those who have seen how readily they acquire mechanical skills know how dangerous is our assumption of superiority. They are not our natural enemies, but they may become so if we continue to make promises without fulfilling them or if we continue to regard them as "slopeys," "wogs," and "gooks." These names, which suggest the derision in which Asiatics are held by too many Americans, represent the real challenge: ignorance and contempt are not shining weapons.

We must realize that Asia, once in the hands of the Communists, cannot be reconquered except by an exhausting campaign which may well last twenty or thirty years, and an expenditure of human material and treasure so vast that our present expenditure would become infinitesimal in comparison. But it is perfectly possible to imagine such an attempt at reconquest taking place. Asia under Communist control is not conquerable by land, sea, or air. There is no profit to be gained, for example, in an attempt at wresting China from the Communists, for the vast spaces allow the Communists an almost infinite maneuverability and they enjoy the advantage of

interior lines. The very shape of Korea should have suggested to the North Koreans that the conquest of South Korea, if the Americans came in force, would be impossible, if only because Korea is a small peninsula jutting out into the China Sea; and the Americans enjoyed the same kind of advantages which were possessed by the Chinese Communists: they could maneuver in the sea and in the air with the utmost freedom, both of these elements giving them the advantages which the guerrillas derive from space. The initial successes of the North Koreans were inevitable; their defeat was inevitable; and in the long run neither the Chinese, the Russians, nor the Americans will have gained anything in their various occupations of Korea.

The Americans should have recognized the Chinese Communist Government because it is always reasonable to recognize what is there. Not to recognize it involves confusion of principles. Franco and Stalin have been recognized; both are despots. Even if Mao Tse-tung were a despot—and there is considerable evidence to show that the majority of the Chinese people do not so regard him—there would be precedent for acknowledging him as head of the state, a state which numbers more inhabitants than any other on this earth. The Chinese Communist assault on Korea arose as much from injured pride as from fear of the West.

The mistakes America has made in Asia spring largely from ignorance of the Asiatic situation. To assist Chiang Kai-shek, Bao Dai and Syngman Rhee, when none of these has the confidence of the people, and when, in fact, all of them have been opposed by the majority of the people, is to court disaster. *For Asiatic nationalists an alliance between American power and puppet governments is an unholy one; and we can no more afford to forget the unholy nature of the alliance than we can afford to forget that our own power in the world will only be temporary if we do not have the majority of the Asiatics on our side.* Already it is becoming doubtful whether we have that majority. If we lack that majority, the game is up on our Western approaches, and we must resign ourselves to becoming, in a shorter time than anyone ever imagined, a second-class power, with a huge Communist Asiatic land mass dictating to us, as very recently we dictated to them.

The time is short. In his brilliant account of the Korean war pub-



lished recently in *Life*, John Osborne concluded a report from the Orient with the words: "We must learn—and learn very soon—to talk to the people of Asia." But the question remains whether we can talk to the people of Asia when we have not even learned their alphabet.

*The greatest error we have committed lies in our refusal to take the Asiatic people into our confidence.* The habits of conquest remained particularly apparent in the early stages of the occupation of Korea. The temptation to discuss and make resolutions concerning Asiatic matters without consulting Asiatic leaders must stop. Only last May, at the Foreign Ministers' Conference, the United States, Britain, and France discussed and made concrete proposals concerning matters in Asia without consulting a single Asiatic government. Resentment against these practices flares up easily in Asia. Shortly after the Foreign Ministers' Conference another conference was held in Baguio, in the Philippines. It was not, in any real sense, a conference representative of the forces which are now moving Asia, for it represented none of the emergent social forces, yet at this conference nationalist leaders gave a sharp reminder to the Western powers that when they spoke about Asia, they would be wise to talk with Asia.<sup>1</sup> "The fate of Asia," wrote Jawaharlal Nehru recently, "is still being determined by statesmen of the western world. I wish to point out that any attempt by statesmen to solve the problems of Asia without taking Asia into consideration cannot succeed." The rebuke is pointed to the Kremlin, as well as to Washington. Both have been, and still are, guilty of the crime of not understanding the nature of the Asiatic revolt.

There occurs now for the first time in the history of the West the possibility that we may have to fight when we are outnumbered, against an overwhelming superiority of man power. If we take the countries of Asia one by one, we see that in each one Communism

<sup>1</sup> The classic example of this phenomenon occurred in the early stages of the occupation in Korea, when the Soviet and American commanders instituted a supreme council to decide upon Korean affairs. At this council no Koreans were allowed to be present, except on the invitation of the Allied commanders. The documents and orders transmitted to the commission were in the languages of the commanders. There appears to have been no difference in the attitudes of the Russian and American commanders: both suffered from the prevailing disease of regarding the Koreans as a conquered people.

has made inroads, and that the Communists in these countries, though they may disagree with the Kremlin in their internal policies, agree wholly with the Kremlin in their external policies. Soviet propaganda has depicted the Soviet Union as the predestined leader of all movements for self-determination and internationalism. To the Asiatics the failure of the Soviet experiment as a result of a blind reliance upon the bureaucracy is not apparent. To them Soviet leadership may appear at times as an incredibly generous gesture of friendship from a mighty "elder brother" socialist state. It could hardly be otherwise at a time when the Western powers have chosen to support reaction on so many fronts. They have been able to call themselves "democratic," but can the Western powers really be described as "democratic" when they pay so little attention to popular forces in the East? Can the French military government in Viet-Nam be described as "democratic"? Could the government of Syngman Rhee be called "democratic"? *We need to revise our definitions of democracy, and having adopted a new and viable definition, we should attempt to apply it.*

The greatest tragedy of our relations with Asia lay in a basic indifference, a sense of the remoteness of Asia from all our normal preoccupations. But Asia is not remote: Korea is only eighteen hours from San Francisco. All distances are vanishing, and we must learn, though the cost may be high, that the Korean peasant staggering along a bombed road is not different from the GI staggering down the same road. Too many people were cold-blooded, forgetting the human equation, thinking in terms of power, strategical positions, engines of war, when the Asiatic peasant was thinking only of his livelihood and his human dignity. But blood, to turn cold, must first be warm. At some time in the past, when the first men from the West arrived in Asia, they possessed a warmheartedness toward the Asiatic peasant which we have now lost. Read Hakluyt or Alexandre de Rhodes; you will find they speak with generosity and warmth of understanding about those peasants, who were almost completely forgotten in our chancelleries. Partly it was the fault of the diplomats themselves. There seemed to be a traditional remoteness about them, and in the East their remoteness increased. Only a few diplomats have performed creditably during the revolt of Asia. Generally they failed to recognize that there was

a kind of blunt human justice in the conquest of China by the Chinese Communists, just as there was justice in the rapid extension of power by the Indonesians. In a sense these two vast revolutions balanced each other. There occurred an extension of socialist power in the tropics balanced by an extension of Communist power in the heartland of China. Two empires arose in 1949 and 1950 where there were no empires before; and through the dust, which has not yet settled, it is possible to discern the huge shapes of power which will be wielded by these empires once they are industrialized. What is remarkable is that the diplomats failed so often to recognize power when they saw it.

We must learn that in Asia especially war rarely solves outstanding problems. It is even debatable whether the conquest of China was desirable: a firmer, more enduring power might have come to the Chinese Communists if they had waited for the complete disintegration of the Kuomintang, which could not have been much longer delayed. The war in Korea is unlikely to solve the problem of how the Koreans will govern themselves. War, as Kim Il Sung and Choy Yong Kun learned to their cost, is an inadequate method of arriving at social solutions, and there are advantages in a liberal philosophy which do not outweigh the gains of a militant belief in a new social order. There are signs that liberalism may yet have a hold on Asia. Certainly there are traces of it in the writings of Mao Tse-tung, and there is no ambiguity in the liberalism of Nehru and Soetan Sjahrir.

The years 1949-1950 introduced totally new patterns in Asia. Jakarta, Peking and Delhi are the new axes of reference. Sooner than we think, the power exerted by these three capitals may be greater than the power exerted by Moscow or Washington. A union between Indonesia, China, and India is still possible. If it should come, the West would do well to speak in a different tone to the East, and we might begin by taking the Asiatic leaders into our confidence.

The victory of the revolutionary Indonesians, following hard on the victory of the Chinese Communists, will be followed by more victories. The triumphal march cannot be stopped. We shall have to learn to live with these triumphant people; and it is perhaps important to observe that the Chinese Communists, who won so resound-

ing a victory against the American-aided Kuomintang, also won a victory against the Soviet Union, which had never effectively assisted them and whose ideology, in spite of surface resemblances, often differs from their own. We must learn to live with the revolutionary Asiatic peasants. Many of the things we find dangerous among them are traits and trends which long antedate Communism or the revolt of Asia. Through all history the peasants have desired a better livelihood, but it has been only during the last five years that they have been able to make their demands heard. Communism to the Asiatics is a mixed blessing: it has partly liberated and partly stifled their creative forces, but it is useless to attack them for having accepted whatever is socialist in Communism. To insist on free enterprise in Asia, where only the rich are free, is to insist upon something which the Asiatics, with their inherent sense of community, are unlikely to find palatable. Just as in Russia "communalism" antedates Communism, for the *obtschina* of the peasants and the artels of the artisans are the prerevolutionary seeds which flowered into the enormous state farms and state industries, so in Asia, ruled for so long through millions of village councils, we can expect to see a form of "communalism" surviving, closer to socialism than to capitalism, and closer to their own traditional forms than anything which can be described as modern socialism.

The day of the white man is over; it would be better if he accepted the fact with good grace, and saw himself, as he is, in no way superior to the Asiatic. Soon the downward thrust of the Republic of Indonesia must meet Australia; and if Australia still, like another South Africa, speaks of a "white man's country," there is hardly any power on earth which will prevent it from falling into the hands of men with darker skins. The wave of revolution which has been gathered on the eastern rim of the Indian Ocean will soon sweep back and hurl itself over Africa; and this too cannot be prevented, nor is it desirable that it should be prevented, if only because there is a human justice which transcends the arbitrary justice of the lawgivers.

In all these revolutions America can fulfill an essential function, but only on condition that she speaks in human and social terms, and develops a dynamic which is understandable to the common people. She has not done this yet. She cannot perhaps ever do it

without suffering a revolution herself. One of the conditions of American power in Asia is that America resolves her own racial problems. As long as there is discrimination against the Negro, there will be Asiatics who will believe that the same kind of discrimination will be exercised against them. And as long as Negroes are flogged in the prisons of Georgia and Alabama, there will be Asiatics to tell the story. When the first American Negro is sent as an Ambassador to the Far East, we shall have gone some way to exorcise a tragic ghost.

We must learn, too, the power of symbols. There was symbolism in the meeting between Nehru and Hatta in the summer of 1950, for Nehru came as the descendant of a long line of Indian conquerors who had once ruled over the islands of the Indies. Mao Tse-tung has decreed that the Forbidden City in Peking shall become the center of Chinese Communist power; inevitably, though perhaps unconsciously, Communist power will find itself encrusted with some patterns of the Ming Dynasty. In his youth Mao Tse-tung had possessed a particular affection for the trees in Peking, but when he came to power he ordered that the trees outside the Tien An Men should be cut down, to produce a vast square leading to the gates of that part of Peking known as the Chinese City, and this too was symbolic of the vast spaces conquered by his armies. Chiang Kai-shek built his bronze urns. Nehru received the ancient Hindu worship due to kings, with all the sacred symbols. Not all these symbolic acts were valuable, but some such symbols were necessary. If the West is to demonstrate its power on human and social levels in the East, it must fashion symbols like these.

Meanwhile we need—never more urgently than now—a policy which is prepared to be imaginatively aggressive in Asia, an attempt toward leadership by America on all constructive levels. A minimum program would include a Manifesto to the Nations of Asia outlining the nature of American purposes in the East, and an admission of error. It will include the use of radio on a far more vigorous scale than the Voice of America has contemplated, and it will enunciate an entirely new concept of what America stands for.

*Only a progressive America can make contact with revolutionary Asia: if America aligns herself with the princes and the landlords, everything will be lost. We cannot win the Asiatics from reactionary*

sovietism if we assist the reaction. By supporting the social forces which are making for the betterment of the Asiatic peasant, America can still exert her influence in Asia, but there is no other way in which her influence can be brought to bear. The Asiatics, as Korea proved, are not afraid of American military power, or indeed of any other Western power. Rabble in arms destroyed Dutch military power in Indonesia and American military power in China, and if the British had not left India peacefully, Indian rabble would have thrown the British out of India. Today it is useless to think that the military might of the West, except in the form of United Nations armies, can ever again be exercised on Asia.

The hope of the world lies in an American revolution which, on another plane and with other aims, will repeat the successes of the first American Revolution. What is needed is the private and public conspiracy to set America on the path of social revolution. There are destinies that must be accomplished, tasks which history sets before great nations, only to punish them if these tasks are not assumed. Among these tasks are:

1. The declaration of a Manifesto to the Nations of Asia, which will outline the tasks that America sets herself in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

2. An Asiatic Relief Program equivalent in its extent to the European Relief Program, administered by the United Nations in close cooperation with UNESCO, accompanied by surveys as careful and dependable as the recent Bell Economic Survey Mission in the Philippines.

3. The extension of the Fulbright Act, so that unprecedentedly large numbers of Asiatic apprentices and students can receive education in America. It may even be necessary to design special universities for these students.

4. The abandonment of the policy of "containing" Communism in America, and the acceptance of the principle that America must take the initiative against Communism except in those countries where Communism patently satisfies the needs of the peasants. This means that the ideology of totalitarian, bureaucratic, and nihilistic Communism becomes the declared enemy, while Asiatic Communism, in so far as it differs from Russian Communism, is to be aided.

5. The abandonment, as soon as possible, of military government in Japan, and the substitution of civilian advisers with administrative powers.

6. The declaration of the Grand Line which will be defended at all costs, and at the same time the declaration that all those who prefer not to live under Communism will be cared for if they escape from Communist control.

7. The dispatch of trained propagandists for the American cause, in far larger numbers than those who have hitherto been sent, to form central nuclei. They should not be sent as spies, but as educators, advisers, and publicists, and they should be prepared for their duties by special courses in the understanding of the Asiatic peasant.

8. The resources of radio and the films should be employed for a massive propaganda campaign comparable to the campaign which is being put on by the Russians. The standard of films shown in Asia must be as high as possible, and a special committee in Washington should have power to refuse permission for the export of films dangerous to the American cause. At least three-quarters of the films produced by Hollywood would not be given export licenses.

9. The establishment of a special secretaryship for Asia within the framework of the Department of State, with far wider powers than the present Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs.

10. It should be recognized that there is need for a vast program for education which will make the American people conscious of the revolutionary changes taking place in Asia, and that all schools and colleges which do not give their students an account of the Asiatic revolt are failing in their task.

11. Since the solution of the racial problem in the southern states of America is intimately connected with the solution of the outstanding problems in American relations with Asia, increasing and urgent efforts must be taken to resolve the problem satisfactorily to the Negro.

12. Above all, there is needed a new dynamic approach to the problem of Asia, and this is more especially needed now that America has shown in Korea that it possesses the military dynamism necessary to oppose a determined adversary. The new dynamic will involve an army of principles, for as Thomas Paine declared, "an army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail: it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean that can arrest its progress: it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer."

To those who complain that these measures are impractical or revolutionary, it is sufficient to reply that American lack of policy toward the Orient has had disastrous effect. There has been lack of a coordinated policy and lack of principles, and in high government circles a sustained ignorance of the forces at work. The theory of "containment," perhaps the most disastrous of many theories invoked to permit bureaucrats to rest on their laurels, must be abandoned; the time has come for America to go over to the offensive. America will have to stand up and declare itself. It has not done so yet.

The measures outlined here are not revolutionary, and many of them have been announced before. Walter Reuther's proposal that the United States invest more than a trillion dollars in a one-hundred-year fight for social security throughout the world and his statement that such a total peace offensive has become a "compelling necessity for democratic survival" are to be taken with the utmost seriousness. America can, with its immense resources, become the machine which will introduce the welfare world. If she does not, she will not only have failed in her historical task but she will also be condemned and hated by those who saw America as the one remaining hope of a world given over to inhuman doctrines. The very humanity of America must enter the struggle.

In one of his short stories Herman Melville recounts an adventure which occurred to someone who was uncommonly like himself in the Berkshires. A violent storm arises, and the narrator, standing by his hearthstone, is suddenly conscious of the presence of the lightning-rod man, a strange individual with a lean, gloomy figure and dark, lank, matted hair streaked over his forehead. He is the image of threats and the conveyor of irresponsible advice. He urges Melville to stand away from the hearthstone, because people who remain beside the hearthstone are scattered into fragments by lightning. Melville will have none of it. He stands his ground. In storms, according to the lightning-rod man, one should avoid pine trees, high houses, lonely barns, running water, and flocks of cattle; one should walk slowly, and if on horseback, one should dismount and walk with the horse, and tall men should be avoided, whereupon Melville exclaims: "Do I dream? Man avoid man? And in danger-time, too." The lightning-rod man continues his threats. He points



out the virtues of his lightning rod, a strange meaningless polished copper thing with its two mysterious balls of greenish glass. The storm rages. The lightning-rod man is persistent. The magic wand is there, to be employed by Melville should he choose, but Melville remains by the hearthstone, until, unable to bear the presence of the mysterious stranger any longer, he suddenly exclaims: "In thunder as in sunshine, I stand at ease in the hands of my God. False negotiator, away! See, the scroll of the storm is rolled back; the house is unharmed; and in the blue heavens I read in the rainbow, that the Deity will not, of purpose, make war on man's earth." The lightning-rod man springs at him, trying to drive the rod into his heart. Thereupon Melville seizes the rod, snaps it, dashes it down, treads the rod into the ground, and flings the "dark lightning king" out of doors.

The story is clearly an allegory, for many times previously Melville had spoken of "the old hearth-stone in Eden," meaning by this the classic American virtues. To Melville it was America's destiny that this huge nation should become the place where all cultures met and grew together, where men could grow into proud freedom and imperious strength, unafraid of storms, helping one another, never relying on adventitious aids, with no cheap lightning rods but using their main strength and main intelligence to unravel the problems of the world. The "lightning king" looks today uncommonly like Moscow's form of bureaucratic Communism, and perhaps the inevitable reply must be the treatment which Melville gave to him. Certainly, if Americans really mean anything when they speak about freedom and democracy, it cannot be freedom and democracy for Americans alone. What is needed is a voyage of the sort which will bring us, in Hakluyt's words, "to the certain and full discovery of the world." And for the moment most of the world is Asia.

It is possible, but only just possible, that America will take notice of its responsibilities in time. Without the inextinguishable flame, the burning knowledge that East and West are one, that American and Negro and Javanese and Chinese and Tamil and Amboinese and Turkoman and Hindu, and all the rest of the tribes, are one, then it is inconceivable that Americans will leave any mark on Asia. She cannot send her ambassadors there in cold blood; they must go warmly, or not at all. And if Americans do not go to Asia, and help Asia with all the resources they command, then the game is up: the

shops can be shut and the graves dug, for a vengeful Asia could swing the world in time against America and demand payment for a long history of exploitation and colonialism in the past.

In a world at arms Asia potentially possesses resources which outweigh the resources of the West. We can look at the map, and it may seem to us that Indochina and Burma are small countries, and Indonesia is only a scattered necklace of islands, and India is lost in its own immensity, and China is in disgrace, and Korea is a desert wasted by three wars, and Persia hardly concerns us, for it is close to the Soviet frontier, and Tibet is unreachable, and Thailand is a small paradise where the king plays jazz. All this would be true enough were it not that there are immense multitudes of half starving peasants who are revolting all over Asia in the same way and with the same aims; and though the Indonesians have revolted in a way which led them beyond any forms of bureaucratic Communism, the peasants of Indonesia were moved by the same forces which moved the Chinese Communists, and their revolt obeyed the same impulses and occurred with the employment of the same weapons, for the same ends, according to the same historic laws.

It is because we have been ignorant of those laws, those weapons, and those ends that we must make up for lost time. There is very little time left. On the decisions of American statesmen in the next few months will depend the issues of war and peace for the next hundred years. Either there will be all Asia aligned with us, or all Asia aligned against us; either there will be a world at peace, or there will be a war fought over a long period of years in which there will be no winners; but America will suffer more than Asia because Asia has far greater human resources. For the first time a war against Asia has become a possibility, to be feared as one fears no other wars. Meanwhile, the choice is ours.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES  
ON ASIATIC COMMUNIST LEADERS**



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON ASIATIC COMMUNIST LEADERS

### *ALIMIN PRAWIRODIRDJO*

One of the relatively few Javanese revolutionaries, Alimin was the adopted son of a Dutch professor, was educated in Batavia, and proceeded to enter a commercial career when the full impact of Serekat Islam made him decide to become a nationalist. His nationalism was intense, and seems to have been fostered by the knowledge that he had some Dutch blood. But the extreme form of nationalism which he embraced led him almost inevitably to Communism, and from the first he attempted to introduce Communism into the nationalist party. The venerable Hadji Agoes Salim attempted to dissuade him; he refused and was thrown out of the party.

From this point Alimin became the dedicated Communist revolutionary, following the party line and organizing Communist unions. By 1924 he had become chairman of the Indonesian Communist party. In 1925, when the Communist party seemed to be dwindling and party funds were at their lowest, he counseled a revolutionary uprising, against the advice of Tan Malaka. The uprising was attempted. It failed, and Alimin fled by way of Palembang to Singapore, where he was arrested and banished. He went immediately to Canton, helped to prepare the Pacific Labor Conference of the Red International, and came in close contact with the Chinese Communist party headquarters. In 1927, after the defeat of Communism in China, he was once more forced to flee, this time to Vladivostok and thence to Moscow, where he attended the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928, and later attended the various colleges where Communist indoctrination on the highest levels was given. According to his own statement, his fellow students at the college included Laurence Sharkey, whose influence on the Communist revolts in Asia has never been fully determined, Harry Pollitt, Chou En-lai, Ernst Thälmann, Sanzo Nozaka, and Maurice Thorrez. He seems to have spent the years from 1938 through 1941 in Malaya, and to have

gone to Chungking on the outbreak of the Pacific war, and from there made his way to Yenan. He was, however, in Chungking when the war ended, but immediately proceeded to Java, where he once more became secretary-general of the Indonesian Communist party, a post he surrendered in September, 1948, on the arrival of Moeso. He helped to organize the short-lived Madioen Soviet, and when the uprising was put down he was reported to have been executed. According to the official account he was dragged off the train at Wonosari, near Soerakarta, while attempting to reach Jogjakarta in disguise, and executed after a brief military trial. However, considerable doubt exists concerning his death (though none exists concerning the death of Moeso), and the Republic has even made a partial admission that he is being held incommunicado, presumably as a hostage against further Communist uprisings. With Tan Ling-djie, an Indonesian-born Chinese, he remains the most considerable of the Indonesian Communists.

### *MARSHAL KHORLIN CHOIBALSAN*

Born in 1895 at Tsagan-Galbai on the Kerkulen River to a family of wandering herdsmen. At thirteen he entered the Buddhist monastery in Bain-Tyumen (now Choibalsan). At seventeen he fled the monastery and after some wanderings reached Urga (Ulan Bator), where he held many menial jobs, changed his name, and was several times arrested by priests and beaten. He still bears the scars from these beatings. He became a farm laborer, and for a few months a provincial guard. A year later he joined the school which had just been opened within the consular settlement, the only non-Buddhist school in Mongolia. The school was largely in Buddhist hands, and the czarist consular officials were hoping to form a nucleus of pro-Russian students. Choibalsan was proficient in Russian, accepted a scholarship which took him to the University of Irkutsk, and came under the influence of the revolutionary groups in Siberia. Returning to Urga in 1916 or 1917, he joined forces with Sukhe Bator and fought first against the Chinese occupation and then against the occupation of the White Guards under Baron Ungern Sternberg, who was attempting with forced levies to drive across the whole length of Russia. It was largely as a result of Ungern Sternberg's

excesses that Sukhe Bator was able to inaugurate on March 1, 1921, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary party at Kyakhtha, which is, significantly, on the Russian-Mongolian border. Sukhe Bator was named commander in chief of the Mongolian Revolutionary Army, and Choibalsan, then twenty-six, was appointed vice commander in chief with extraordinary political powers. After the assassination of Sukhe Bator in 1923, Choibalsan went into obscurity for a while, and was even charged with right deviationism. He took no part in the proclamation of the People's Republic of Mongolia in 1924. He emerged from obscurity in 1929, when he was named chairman of the government, and he seems to have spent the intervening years in Moscow. After his appointment as chairman, his relations with the Soviet Government have remained close. He paid several visits to Moscow, and in 1939 signed the treaty which allowed the free entry of Soviet troops into Mongolia, ostensibly to take part in an offensive against the Japanese, who were at that time seeking to maintain advance posts in eastern Mongolia. In 1945 he again took part in war against the Japanese, throwing his forces together with the Soviet armies against the Kwangtung Army in Manchuria. Since then he has maintained a close liaison with the Soviets, but he appears to have had little contact with the Chinese Communists until 1947, when it became evident that the tide was turning in China. He has received the Order of Lenin and a considerable number of other Soviet decorations. He visited Moscow on the occasion of Stalin's seventieth birthday, and is continually exchanging telegrams with Stalin couched in the terms with which Mongolians formerly addressed the Hutukhtu in Urga. He has recently visited Peking, and was among the first to recognize the Chinese Communists.

### CHOU EN-LAI

Now premier and foreign minister of the Chinese People's Republic, Chou En-lai is a triple-threat Communist: administrator, negotiator, and military man. Born in Kiangsu in 1898, his grandfather a high official in the Manchu court, he attended Nankai Middle School in Tientsin and in 1917 went to Japan. After a year and a half at Waseda University, he returned to Tientsin and studied at

Nankai University. He was a brilliant student, making his way by scholarships, and he earned a reasonable fame during this period as a female impersonator, playing the part of a peasant girl in a play called *One Dollar*. In 1919, during the student rebellion, he was imprisoned, and while in prison he met Teng Ying-ch'ao, a fellow student who later became his wife. Shortly after his release he traveled to France, studied in Paris, helped to organize the Chinese Communist party in France, and worked for a short time in the coal mines near Lille and in the Rhineland. He spent a few months in England and nearly a year in Germany, where he met Chu Teh, and in 1924 returned to China, already well known as a revolutionary organizer. It was the time of the Communist and Kuomintang entente, and he became an intimate of General Bluecher (Galen), then military adviser to the Kuomintang Government, and he was appointed, against Chiang Kai-shek's declared intentions, first, secretary to, and then head of, the political department of Whampoa Military Academy. In this office he met Mao Tse-tung.

On March 21, 1927, his active political life began when he called out 600,000 strikers in Shanghai in an effort to protect the right wing of the Northern Expedition. The strike was successful, but by April 12th Chiang Kai-shek was determined to break the left-wing of the party and ordered a general massacre of the strike leaders. Chou En-lai escaped to Wuhan, participated in the Nanchang Uprising in August and the Canton Commune in December, and then went into hiding. Shortly afterward he reappeared in Moscow, where he was a delegate to the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. Returning to China in 1931, he served as a political commissar to Chu Teh, became vice chairman of the Military Council, and took part in the Long March (1934-1935) as one of its leaders. He returned to Moscow as a delegate to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935. In December, 1936, as a delegate sent from Yen-an to Sian, he was largely instrumental in saving the life of Chiang Kai-shek. He spent the war years partly in Nanking, partly in Chungking and Yen-an, with a number of offices, including at one time that of vice chairman of the Bureau of Mobilization under the Kuomintang. He was the Chungking representative of the Communist party during the protracted negotiations between the Kuomintang and the Com-



munists, and was appointed premier and foreign minister shortly after the Communists entered Peking.

### CHU TEH

He has been at various times a cowherd, a student at Göttingen University, head of the police in Yunnan province, a teacher of athletics at Chengtu, a student at the Eastern Toilers' University in Moscow, and commander in chief of the Chinese Red Army, a position he has held for nearly twenty years. He was born in 1886 in Yi Lung, Szechwan, the son of a poor tenant father, who employed him as a cowherd. When his father died, he was given to a rich uncle, who helped him through school. Afterward he held a number of odd jobs, including the athletic teacher's job already mentioned, and he was twenty-three before he entered the Yunnan Military Academy, his heart set on a military career because he had been fired by the stories of the Taipings. In 1911 he was a company commander, and he took part in the revolutionary uprising in October; in 1915 he took part in the uprising led by General Ts'ai Ao against Yuan Shih-kai, who was about to proclaim himself emperor. By 1920 Yunnan was under the domination of the warlord T'ang Chih-yao, and Chu Teh took part in the uprising against him. When this succeeded he became commissioner of police and began to accumulate a huge fortune, which he spent on concubines and opium; but T'ang Chih-yao staged a comeback, and Chu Teh took to flight, traveling across the same path which he was later to travel during the Long March, making his way to Szechwan by way of the Tibetan border. For a short while he had been commissioner of finance, and though an unusually honest commissioner, he was able to take with him a large sum of money on the journey. During the journey he cured himself of his addiction to opium and learned guerrilla fighting from the Mantzu tribes, among whom he wandered. In Shanghai he met Sun Yat-sen, Hu Han-min, and Wang Ching-wei, at that time regarded as leaders of the left. He did not accept Sun Yat-sen's invitation to go to America, deciding to go to Germany instead, on the grounds that German military art was superior to any other. He kept in touch with the Kuomintang and

actually founded the first German branch of the Kuomintang in Berlin. He also joined the Chinese Communist party (Berlin branch), which Chou En-lai had founded. He lived for short periods in Paris, attended the Eastern Toilers' University in Moscow for a semester and Göttingen University for two semesters, then returned to China, where he became chief of the Bureau of Public Safety in Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi, where later the Chinese Communists were to establish their first soviets. When insurrection was about to break out in Nanchang at the beginning of August, 1927, Chu Teh, ordered to fire on the rebels, joined with them instead, and there followed the "long-small" march which led Chu Teh to Swatow, then to Heilofeng, then to South Hunan, and then to Chingkanshan, where he joined Mao Tse-tung. At the first Chinese Soviet Congress, in 1931, he was unanimously elected commander in chief of the Red Army. With Mao Tse-tung he led the Long March. From 1937 to 1947 he remained at his headquarters in a date garden in Yen-an. Though Mao Tse-tung wrote the more dramatic orders which were issued during the battle for the conquest of China, the tactics seem to have been developed largely by Chu Teh, who is clearly one of the great military figures of all time.

### *CHOY YONG KUN*

He was marshal of the People's Republic and until recently commander in chief of the North Korean forces, and he is probably more responsible than anyone else for the outbreak of the Korean war. Born in 1904 near Pyongyang, the son of a farmer, he attended school in Seoul, and was noted for his fiery speeches against the Japanese occupation and his leadership of left-wing student organizations. He attended Whampoa Military Academy and later the military academy in Yen-an, where he was politically active in the Independent Alliance of Koreans Overseas, one of the two Korean Communist parties. For a while he taught at the military academy; later he became a brigade commander of the New Fourth Army. He accompanied the Russian Army into Korea, and for a while was thought to be about to assume the premiership, but as director of public safety—a post which included many of the powers of the

minister of the interior and all the powers which fell to him as head of the political and military police—he probably exerted more power than any other Korean in the government. He became commander in chief of the People's Army in 1947, occupying the post of minister of internal defense. He was also the leader of the People's Democratic party, which, though entirely Communist, possessed complicated ramifications throughout South Korea. In February, 1950, he delivered in the main square of Pyongyang a fighting speech which gave the main outlines of the coming war five months before the war occurred.

### *HARI NARAYAN GOSHAL (BA TIN)*

An Indian, born into a middle-class family in Rangoon in 1918, Goshal fell under the influence of the Thakins at Rangoon University, and for a while regarded himself as a minor follower of the movement, calling himself Thakin Ba Tin. He was a fluent speaker who studied deeply in the history of economics and in history, and seems to have held secret reserves even while a member of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. In 1940 he first revealed himself as a Communist. He was imprisoned by the British the following year but escaped to India with Stilwell's Army after the Japanese invasion. Returning to Burma at the end of the war, he became one of the members of the Communist Politburo and general-secretary of the All-Burma Trade Union Congress, the Burmese equivalent of the All-India Trade Union Congress. He was arrested for a short while for picketing in 1946, but was released shortly afterward. In February, 1948, he was sent to attend the secret Communist conferences in Delhi and Calcutta, and at the "Southeast Asia Youth Conference" he was the spokesman for Burma, returning with a twenty-six-page plan for a Communist-led revolt. The conference, which had been largely organized by Laurence Sharkey, the Australian Communist leader, had urged revolts in Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia in July or August; it was characteristic of Goshal that he should have attempted a revolt immediately after his return. The revolt, which began with Goshal's inflammatory speeches during a mass meeting in Mandalay on March 23, 1948, is still continuing.

Thakin Nu has offered a reward of 5,000 rupees for his capture, but he is still at large and now occupies the position of chief political adviser to Than Tun.

**PRESIDENT HO CHIH-MINH** (alias Nguyen Ai-Quoc, Nguyen Tan-Thanh, Sung Meng-chiao, Golin)

A short, spare man with a thin gray beard, large brown eyes, and the manners of a mandarin, he is in many ways the most redoubtable of Asiatic Communist leaders. Born in the province of Vinh in northern Annam, in a village set among mountains, he was the son of a minor official distantly related to the Emperor Duy-Thanh, and of peasant forebears on his mother's side. His revolutionary apprenticeship started early. The province of Vinh was noted for periodic insurrections, and at the age of twelve Ho became a courier for the rebels. A few years later he followed his father to Saigon, and when his father was arrested and dispatched to the prison island of Poulo-Condore, Ho escaped by shipping as a cabin boy on the *D'Artagnan* for France. He visited North Africa, France, and Portugal, and served for a while as a kitchen helper at the Carlton Restaurant under Escoffier. In 1914 he attempted to enlist in the British Army, was unsuccessful, and made his way to Paris.

During the war years Ho appears to have spent most of his time in the French merchant marine, but there is a legend that he became for a while a roadsweeper in Marseille. It was not until 1920, at the time of the Versailles Conference, that he came into a kind of prominence and that was when he wrote a letter to President Wilson demanding the independence of Viet-Nam on the basis of the Fourteen Points. The letter was widely circulated, in manuscript and booklet, among the Annamite students in Paris, and it was smuggled back to Annam by ships' servants. Gradually Ho was organizing his power, quietly going about the task of obtaining the independence of Viet-Nam in spite of the fact that President Wilson paid no attention to his letter. His influence spreading among the workers and students, he began to contribute articles on Viet-Nam to *L'Humanité* and *Le Populaire*, edited a weekly—it was called a weekly, but came out only when the editor possessed sufficient

finances to support it—called *Le Paria*, a name derived from the opening editorial, which said that “the French are treating all colonial subjects like pariah dogs.” During this time he became a convinced socialist, spoke frequently at socialist meetings in the Faubourg Saint-Martin and earned his living as an employee of a photographic studio in Clignancourt. He made trips through Italy, Germany and Switzerland, but these seem to have been of the nature of holidays. Though he was to come to speak French, English, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, and various dialects of Annam with a quite extraordinary ability, he knew neither Italian nor German. It was during this time, too, that he worked in the Bibliothèque Nationale, preparing the fully documented attack on French colonial policy which was published in 1925 under the title *Procès de la colonisation française*.

By the end of 1920, Ho was already being recognized as the inevitable leader of Annamese independence. He attended the congress at Tours in 1920 where the extreme left wing of the socialist party became separated from the Second International and formed the Third International, and at the same time he secretly made overtures to the Communists, convinced that Lenin’s “Manifesto to the Orient” contained the seeds of Asiatic independence. In 1921 he formed “the intercolonial union,” a union which attempted to include all subject peoples within its scope, and in 1924 he visited the Soviet Union as a delegate of the French Communists to the Peasant International (*Krestintern*). For the next year and a half he remained in Moscow, and was elected to the Presidium of the Third World Congress of the Comintern. Disguised as one of the secretaries of Borodin, though his duties were far from being secretarial, he accompanied Borodin to Shanghai and Canton. Little is known of this period except that he visited Hainan and seems to have countenanced the possibility of a revolt in Indochina from bases in Hainan. By this time he was one of the leading members of the Eastern Secretariat of the Comintern, whose headquarters were in Shanghai. In 1927, when Chiang Kai-shek ordered the counterrevolution, Ho fled to Moscow. Two years later he reappeared in Siam, and in 1930 he began a prolonged stay in Hong Kong, and once again set about organizing a Viet-Nam revolutionary party. On June 6, 1931, he was arrested by the British in Hong Kong and banished, only to

reappear in Singapore. Thereafter, for more than ten years, he disappeared completely. It was rumored that in 1939 he was once more in Canton, working in the Soviet Consulate, and that he visited America, Portuguese East Africa, and France, but it seems more likely that he spent most of the time in Macao and in living the life of a wanderer in the mountains of the Indochinese frontier, alone and no longer possessing the plenipotentiary powers he had exerted while a member of the Eastern Secretariat. During this period, too, he sometimes slipped over the Chinese frontier, and at least once he was arrested by Chinese authorities as a French spy; he nearly died during his imprisonment in Kweilin.

At this stage there begins his phenomenal rise to real power. The small village revolutionary groups he had founded during his wanderings became the nucleus of the revolutionary movement which swept down from the hills at the end of the war. Released from prison in 1944, he attended a conference of Annamite revolutionaries in Kunming in 1945 and then slipped over the border by way of Tonkin, living quietly in a small village a few miles from Thai Nguyen. At the Viet-Minh conference held in Cobang in August, 1945, he was unanimously elected president of the provisional government and entered Hanoi in triumph. From this time on he became the acknowledged leader of the revolutionary forces of the country which fought under the red, gold-starred flag which was first seen when his columns, numbering hardly more than 10,000 men, occupied northern Annam with the assistance of American weapons parachuted down to them and some American technical advice, fighting a short guerrilla war against the Japanese and also against the Kuomintang forces under General Lu Han. Ho Chih-minh represented Viet-Nam in the early negotiations with France, signing the treaty of March 6, 1946, and heading the Viet-Nameese delegation to Fontainebleau in the summer of 1946. Since then he has been living in hiding, moving secretly from village to village in Tonkin, and his voice has been heard regularly on the Viet-Nam radio.

After Sjahrir, Ho Chih-minh is probably the most accomplished of the Asiatic leaders who have come under the influence of Western culture. He is the pure scholar, writing French with verve and precision, and is capable of turning out poems modeled on the poems

of the Chinese T'ang Dynasty which could only have been written by someone who is also deeply immersed in French culture. He was once married, but long ago lost track of his wife. His real name is unknown. Nguyen Ai-Quoc (which means "he who loves his country") and Ho Chih-minh (which means "the enlightened one") are clearly pseudonyms. He says himself that he has had so many pseudonyms that he cannot remember them all. He is unmarried, and has no known relatives.

Quiet, cautious, possessed of endless patience, rarely dogmatic, he appears to be marked out as one of the "great four" of modern Asiatic revolutionaries, alongside Gandhi, Soetan Sjahrir, and Mao Tse-tung.

### *JEN PI-SHIH*

Like Liu Shao-chi, Jen Pi-shih's influence is felt mostly behind the scenes, though his occasional speeches are printed on the front pages. Short, wiry, with an intense manner and a great deal of humor, Jen Pi-shih was born in Changsha in 1899 and attended the Normal School there at the same time that Mao Tse-tung was organizing his first revolutionary society. He organized the Communist Youth League in 1921, and for six years remained its general secretary. In 1927, during the April massacre, he went underground, living quietly as a portrait painter in Hankow. There was a price on his head, the Kuomintang police were continually searching for him, and he was known to be in Hankow. When the net became tighter, he returned secretly to Shanghai, where in 1931 he was elected one of the seven members of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist party and later became a member of the first Soviet Government in Kiangsi. When Ho Lung formed the Second Front Army in the Hunan-Hupeh Soviet, Jen Pi-shih accompanied him as political commissar, a position corresponding to that occupied by Mao Tse-tung. In 1938 he was made head of the political department of the Eighth Route Army. In 1945 he was elected to the Central Executive Committee again, after having retired from it for some years. After the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic he was put in charge of agrarian taxation. He died in October 1950, of a brain hemorrhage.

**PURAN CHAND JOSHI, LL.B., M.A.**

Born in 1907, the son of a school principal at Almora, in what used to be called United Provinces, Joshi studied law at Allahabad University. While still in college, he joined the Communist party; he had hardly left college when he was convicted in 1929 in the Meerut Conspiracy case, and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Among the prisoners were many of the students who had joined the party under Joshi's influence. The party was illegal until 1934, when Joshi came out of prison. Three years later he became secretary-general of the party, edited the party weekly, *National Front*, started a new organ called *The People's War* (later changed to *The People's Age*), and set about forming small party nuclei throughout India. For the first six months following the Nazi attack on Russia, Joshi's Communists were out of touch with the Comintern and denounced India's participation in it. When a change of heart occurred, the Indian Communists under Joshi became enthusiastic supporters of the war to the extent that the British came to regard them as allies. They were offered large sums of money, their newspapers were allowed to exist, and though they acquired the opprobrium of Congress they gradually began to infiltrate on a large scale through the peasant kisans. They opposed Gandhi's "reign of anarchy" in 1942, and at the war's end they were made to pay for their anti-Congress attitude. Thereafter most of their activity has been underground, and the whole party has been racked by schisms which came to a head in June, 1950, though Joshi had already been drummed out of the party and was forming a new one which received the guarded assent of Moscow.

Tall, bespectacled, looking like a schoolmaster, with a brilliant tongue and a complete mastery of invective, Joshi is still a force to be reckoned with.

**KIM IL SUNG**

He was born in 1912 at Pyongyang, the son of a peasant. The name is a pseudonym: his real name is Kim Sung Chu, and under this name he fought protracted guerrilla wars against the Japanese from bases in Manchuria, where his father had fled after being jailed by the Japanese following the famous 1919 uprising. He is



heavily built, with a square jaw, and though many published photographs make him look short, he is actually taller than the majority of Koreans. The most important fact about him is that he has spent the greater part of his life fighting guerrilla wars.

He was nineteen when the Japanese invaded Manchuria. He immediately organized the Korean Patriotic Group, which began with a handful of men and gradually assumed vast proportions; the group became large enough to impose its will on five Manchurian counties near the Korean border, and these counties were organized as an autonomous Korean Government. From this base attacks were launched on Korea, and especially on Japanese garrisons. There is a widely believed rumor that he attended Whampoa Military Academy in 1927, but the rumor is inherently unlikely, if only because he was fifteen at the time. He did, however, visit Moscow in the early thirties, and became an apt pupil of Marxist-Leninism. He seems from the beginning to have occupied a preferred position in Stalin's affections. Returning to Manchuria in 1935, at about the time when the Chinese Communists were being established in Yen-an, he became president of the Union for Liberation, which included a variety of parties, and he continued to direct guerrilla campaigns. The Japanese offered rewards for the capture of the elusive guerrilla commander, and for some time it was believed that he was dead. All that had happened, however, was that an assassin had killed one of his lieutenants, and the head of the lieutenant was believed by the Japanese to belong to Kim Sung Chu. Meanwhile, the guerrilla attacks, now modeled largely on methods worked out by Mao Tse-tung, continued.

He entered North Korea on August 10, 1945, with the Soviet Army, after disbanding his guerrillas in Manchuria. He began his first public speech some weeks later, when he attended an Anti-Japanese Resistance Congress at Pyongyang, with florid thanks to the Soviet Union and to Marshal Stalin, but he did not become premier until the end of the year. He told Anna Louise Strong that he slipped into the country in disguise and with a different name, because "I had been so long in the hills that I felt it necessary to learn the daily life and problems of my country." There was some mystery attached to his return which has never been sufficiently cleared up, though Kim Koo, interviewed by Andrew Roth, sub-

stantiated that Kim Il Sung was indeed the legendary guerrilla leader he claimed to be.

He was chiefly responsible for whipping up the industrialization of North Korea, and he made extensive tours in the country, speaking about industrialization almost to the exclusion of everything else. Determined to crush the South Korean Government, he seems to have planned the invasion at a very early stage in his premiership, and seems to have been restrained by the Russians with some difficulty. He journeyed to Russia in the spring of 1949 and returned with a loan, a trade agreement, and a cultural pact; it is possible that he also had possession of a military pact. Though the invasion of South Korea failed, his ability to command the invading army showed considerable generalship, and it is likely that he will lead the North Korean guerrillas for some time to come.

### LEE SOONG

Very little is known about the Malayan Chinese who attended the "Southeast Asia Youth Conference" in Calcutta in February and March, 1948. Lee Soong was the only delegate from Malaya, and he is known to have been in constant communication with Laurence Sharkey after they both returned together to Singapore. Together they appear to have planned the Malayan uprising. It is possible that Lee Soong is the same as the mysterious Lai Teck, who was secretary-general of the Malayan Communist party, with headquarters in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, for some years after the Japanese surrender.

### LIU SHAO-CHI

Short and rugged, with a typical Hunanese face, rarely given to gestures, and wholly unemotional, Liu Shao-chi follows the classical pattern of "the engineer of revolt." His power in China is second only to Mao's (he was acting chairman of the party during Mao's visit to Chungking), and he is the senior of the six vice chairmen of the Central People's Government, wielding power as a labor leader, as an official theoretician, and as Mao's deputy.

Born in 1900 in Ninghsiang hsien, he attended the Normal School

at Changsha where Mao Tse-tung was exerting a great influence on the students. In 1920 he joined the Socialist Youth League, which soon came under Communist domination. He then became a labor organizer in the coal mines of Honan. He is regarded as a foundation member of the Chinese Communist party, but by some accident he did not attend the first meeting. In the spring of 1922 he was appointed to the secretariat of the Chinese Labor Organization and worked on the problems of the peasantry in the Hunan-Hupei area, in close touch with Mao, and in 1924, with Li Li-san, he helped to organize the first strike in Shanghai against British and Japanese textiles. In 1925 he was elected vice chairman of the All-China Federation of Labor, and spent the winter of 1925-1926 in Canton, organizing trade unions. During the Northern Expedition of 1926 he visited hundreds of villages in Hupei, organizing and arming the peasants, doing in Hupei exactly what Mao Tse-tung was doing in Hunan, and bearing the title of "delegate from Hupei" at the Communist conference in Wuhan. He was with Chou En-lai in Shanghai during the April massacre, and after the defeat of the Communist uprising in the late spring of 1927 he went underground, spending most of his time hiding in Hupei, until he succeeded in joining the Kiangsi Soviets in the autumn of 1932; he also made a short visit to Moscow. Between 1936 and 1942 he became successively secretary of the Northern Bureau, Central Plains Bureau, and Central China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party, having been since 1932 a member of the party's political bureau. He also became director of the Red Army's Department of Mass Mobilization and political commissar of the New Fourth Army, and from 1943 onward he held the position of vice chairman of the Revolutionary Military Committee, a post which brought him into direct and continual contact with Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh. In June, 1949, he was made honorary president of the All China Federation of Labor, and three months later he became vice chairman of the government, with extraordinary powers to shape the organization of labor throughout China.

He writes with a dry, crackling logic, without wit, but with great force. He drives himself hard, confesses that he can rarely afford more than four hours' sleep at night and has often been ill. The

sweeping powers over Chinese industry which he possesses have long been known, and they became explicit on May 1, 1950, when he gave a May Day address in Peking which demonstrated that he had been placed in charge of agrarian reform as well as industrial reorganization. Like Mao Tse-tung, he is ruthlessly impatient with the servility of many cadres, and unlike many of the Communist leaders he rarely refers to Mao Tse-tung in his speeches. Severe, practical, and tough, he represents the emergence of the type of "managerial commissar," and of all the Chinese Communist leaders he is probably the one whose influence is most widespread, reaching down into the remotest villages.

### MAO TSE-TUNG

Chairman of the Chinese Communist party and chairman of the Communist-dominated Chinese People's Republic in Peking, his eminence within the party is undisputed. Born the son of comparatively wealthy peasants in 1893, he was largely self-educated, though he attended various schools and teacher-training colleges until he was twenty-seven. He organized his first military campaign (against soldiers attempting to take over his school) when he was eighteen, joined the revolutionaries in Hankow when he was twenty-one, but remained with them only a few months, and afterward proceeded to found a small and purely Hunanese political party dedicated to removing the governor of the province and the inculcation of the ideas of the "reformers" Kang Yu-wei and Liang Chichao. Previously a Buddhist, he then became a liberal socialist and some time afterward a determined anarchist. He did not become a Communist until 1921, when he attended the founding of the party in Shanghai as a delegate from Hunan. For a short while he was an assistant librarian in the National University of Peking, and it was there that he came under the influence of two Communists: Li Ta-chao and Chen Tu-hsiu, both famous, one for having led the student rebellion which came to be called the May Fourth Movement, the other for his editorship of *The New Youth*, a monthly magazine which was devoted to the encouragement of young China, insisting that the young could take over the whole country against the war-

lords. In 1924 he joined the Kuomintang party, and by 1926, as a result of his close friendship with Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min, both senior members of the Kuomintang, he was already occupying a high position. He became editor of the *Political Daily*, taught at Whampoa Academy, and was placed in charge of Kuomintang bureaus dealing with the peasants. He sent himself to Hunan, where, preparatory to the Northern Expedition in 1927, he organized, armed, and fed the peasants with ceaseless streams of propaganda from Canton. When the army led by Chiang Kai-shek failed to produce any agrarian reforms, he sparked the peasant rebellions in the late spring of 1927 throughout Hunan. These rebellions were crushed, but Mao attempted still another rebellion in the autumn which was known as the Autumn Crop Uprising. When this was crushed, he fled with a thousand men to the range of hills known as Chingkanshan (Blue View Mountains) on the borders of Hunan and Kiangsi. There he was joined later by Chu Teh, who brought another two thousand men to the mountains. In 1929 the small Red Army under Mao Tse-tung fought its way through a Kuomintang encirclement and established itself in the hills of Kiangsi southeast of Kian. This was the beginning of the Kiangsi soviets. Against these Chiang Kai-shek organized five separate and prolonged "annihilation campaigns." The first four were beaten off, but the last was successful, and the remnants of the Red Army were forced to flee. In Kiangsi began the Long March which brought the Red Army to the borders of Tibet and thence to the loess mountains of Shensi close to the Ordos desert. From 1931 Mao had been in fact, if not always in name, chairman of the Chinese Communist party. When he arrived in Yen-an, he was addressed continually as chairman, though it was only in 1944 that the title was officially and publicly offered to him.

Mao's position in the party derives from his theoretical writings (he has written at least ten short books, including *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary Wars*, *Coalition Government*, *New Democracy*, and *On a Prolonged War*), from his knowledge of guerrilla tactics, from his administrative abilities, and from his prestige as the acknowledged leader of the Long March. He has been the intellectual leader of the party since 1928.

*PAK HEUNG YUNG*

Appointed foreign minister of the North Korean Government shortly after the invasion of South Korea, Pak Heung Yung is one of the most intelligent, and one of the least flamboyant, of Asiatic Communist leaders. Born in 1900, the son of a laborer, he was educated at the YMCA school in Seoul, where he learned English, a language which he now claims he has completely forgotten. Small and sturdy, looking like any Korean laborer, he took part in the 1919 independence movement and was one of the founders of the Korean Communist party in Seoul in 1921, becoming head of the illegal Young Communist League. Arrested by the Japanese in 1922, he was released after prolonged torture in 1924. A marked man, he disappeared among the masses, only to be arrested again in 1926. Freed in 1928, he was smuggled to Moscow through Siberia. He spent eighteen months in Russia, most of the time recuperating from a dangerous illness and the effects of torture. Returning in 1930 to Seoul, he went underground for the second time, living the life of an ordinary bricklayer while continuing to dominate the Korean Communist party. Arrested again in 1933, he was kept in prison until 1939. Immediately after his release he became secretary-general of the Korean Communist party, a post which he held continually until the emergence of Kim Il Sung. After the Allied victory he remained in hiding in South Korea for a year, though he was in continual contact with Lyuh Woon Heung's People's party and with Kim Koo, hoping to form a coalition party with effective power. The Korean Communist party in South Korea was then at a low ebb, with probably no more than 5,000 members, and Pak Heung Yung was, for a while at least, noted for his moderation. He demanded the simultaneous withdrawal of the Russian and American forces and favored the abolition of the 38th parallel. He might conceivably have remained a moderating influence among the Communists in South Korea if there had not been a wave of arrests of Communist leaders in September, 1946. He fled to the northern zone and remained there in considerable obscurity until the outbreak of the war.

Wearing horn-rimmed glasses, his dark face deeply sun-tanned, muscular and robust, he represents the working classes in Korea much as Liu Shao-chi represents them in China.

*JAAFAR PISHEVARI* (alias Sultan-Zade, Sayid Jaafar Badku Bayi and so forth)

The chairman of the revolutionary Azerbaijan Government in 1946, Pishevari had a long history of revolutionary activity in Iran. He was born at Harau in northwest Iran, and most of his political activity has been in that area. He migrated to Baku in 1904, when he was sixteen, and he seems to have come into contact with the Bolshevik party at that time. In 1918, under the name of Sayid Jaafar Badku Bayi, which may be translated as "Sayid Jaafar of Baku Bay," he accompanied the Red Army when it entered Iran. There seems to be little doubt that his real name is Pishevari. When the Red Army was pushed out of Iran, Pishevari disappeared, only to become leader of the "jungle revolutionaries" who fought a frontier war from Gilan on the Caspian Sea. When this collapsed, he fled to Moscow. He was not to return to Iran for sixteen years.

In 1936, claiming to be a refugee from the purges, he returned to Tehran but was immediately exiled to Kashan and kept under police supervision. There followed lonely years, when he was out of contact with revolutionary movements, and it was not until 1945 that he suddenly emerged from obscurity as leader of the Democratic party in Tabriz. On December 12 he proclaimed himself president of the Azerbaijan Government, a position he retained throughout 1946. He inspired and helped to create the Kurdish People's Republic, and found allies within the Tudeh party, which was mainly centered upon Tehran and Meshed. When the Iranian premier Ahmed Glavam Sultaneh sent troops into Azerbaijan, the revolt collapsed, and Pishevari once more sought refuge over the frontier. If the frontier region can once again be created, he will probably return.

### *THAKIN SOE GYI*

Like so many of the Burmese leaders, he attended Rangoon University at the time when it was given over to nationalist fervor and the Thakin party was being formed under the benevolent eyes of the venerable Thakin Kodaw Hmine. He became a prominent member of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and at the same time seems to have been secretly a Communist. During the war he be-

came a guerrilla leader, filling his ranks with Communists, and at the end of the war, after successive quarrels with the AFPFL leaders, he openly announced himself as a Communist. Shortly afterward he quarreled with Than Tun and Thein Pe, and at a meeting held in February, 1946, he led the splinter group which called itself the Red Flag Communists. With headquarters in Arakan, he led his small hastily equipped armies against the British and the AFPFL, and later against the White Flag Communists. He was arrested in March, 1948, when it was suspected that he would join the Red Flag Communists after Goshal's return from India, but he was deliberately allowed to escape from prison when the animosity between the two parties became evident. Though he has little education—he seems not to have passed beyond his first year of studies at Rangoon University—he has a natural military ability and considerable persuasiveness. According to J. S. Furnivall, who knew most of the members of the Thakin party, he is "probably the most chauvinistic of Burma's nationalists." Unfortunately, he is also a considerable military leader.

### *LUIS TARUC*

Short, agile, with an intense expression and a lean sharp face, Taruc is mainly responsible for having brought the Hukbalahaps into prominence. Born in San Luis, Pampanga, of lower-middle-class parents, he completed his high-school class with difficulty, because his parents had little money, and failed to complete his course at the university. In 1937 he became the secretary of Pedro Abed Santos, and thereafter he began to rise rapidly, becoming general-secretary of the General Union of Workers. He was known for his speech-making and organizing ability, but he was no theoretician. In December, 1945, after a secret visit to Pedro Abed Santos, then in Manila, Taruc set about organizing labor against the Japanese; originally, he was able to organize only the labor of Pampanga. Later he extended his control over wide areas. On March 29, 1942, at a hideout in the woods near Mount Arayat, he founded the Hukbalahaps with Castro Adejandrino as vice commander in chief. Under Taruc's leadership the Hukbalahaps fought vigorously and bravely against the Japanese, but serious excesses were committed,



and when the war ended, Taruc and Adejandrino found themselves in prison, the leadership of the guerrillas falling to Mariano Balgos, an admitted Stalinist. After their arrest there was hope for a while that the Hukbalahaps could be admitted into the government, but under the presidency of Roxas the hope dwindled, to be revived when President Elpidio Quirino offered an amnesty to Taruc and the Hukbalahaps shortly after he came to power. The amnesty, however, did not provide security either to the government or to Taruc, and shortly afterward outbreaks of guerilla warfare were resumed. Taruc is now in hiding in the mountains of Nueva Ecija.

### *THAKIN THAN TUN*

A student at Rangoon University during the class of 1937, Thakin Than Tun has been chiefly concerned with agrarian reform and the political leadership of the Burmese Communist party, occupying a position roughly equivalent to that of Liu Shao-chi in China. Born in 1911 at Toungoo, the son of a timber merchant, he married Aung San's sister and at one time came into high prominence within the AFPFL, becoming eventually for a short space its secretary-general while at the same time he retained the title of president of the Burmese Communist party. Previously, during the Japanese occupation, he was successively minister of agriculture and member of the Preparatory Independence Committee, which attempted, without much success, to work out the terms of independence which would be granted by the Japanese. He also became minister of supplies and worked extensively on cooperative societies in rural areas. His most important contribution to the war effort was a journey to the Karen strongholds during which he successfully convinced the Karens of the need for them to join the AFPFL.

Though Martin Ebon regards him as tainted with pro-Japanese leanings during the war, there is little evidence that he had any love for the Japanese, and his election as secretary-general of the AFPFL shortly after the war suggests that he was regarded as a nationalist by the Thakins. His Communism, however, was undisguised, and once he had been expelled from the AFPFL he quite coolly determined to be leader of the party. Though Thakin Soe had been his greatest friend and accomplice during the war years,

he expelled him from the party in 1946, and two years later he expelled Thakin Thein Pe. He is said to have attended the "South-east Asia Youth Conference" in Calcutta with Goshal, but there is reason to believe that he remained in rural Burma. With Goshal he is still directing the Red Flag Communists. Eccentric, incautious, with a tendency to approve of violence for its own sake, he is not regarded by Thakin Nu as so dangerous as Goshal, for while Goshal has a price of 5,000 rupees on his head, Thakin Than Tun has only a price of 2,500.

### THAKIN THEIN PE

A frail sick man, who at the age of thirty-four has crowded more adventures into his life than most of the Burmese leaders, Thakin Thein Pe no longer wields great authority within the Burmese Communist party. He has been journalist, novelist, and spy; for a brief while he was secretary-general of the Communist party; he has been imprisoned three times; and he was the first Communist to occupy a cabinet post in Burma.

He was born in 1916, the son of a surveyor, and attended Rangoon University, where he joined the Thakin party in 1937. After graduating he wrote a series of journalistic best sellers, including *Tetpongyi* (The Modern Monk) and a study of venereal disease called *The Modern Devil*. Modernism was very close to his heart, and the most modern political theory being Communism, he embraced it openly and visited India to make contact with the Indian Communist party. But he did not openly join the party until 1943, when he was actively engaged in the resistance movement in northern Burma. In India he wrote, during a visit intended to bring about a greater liaison between the British forces and the Burmese resistance movement, another best seller called *What Happened in Burma*. From that moment he was continually making clandestine visits to Burma at great risk, reporting to the Allied military command by radio. After the British reoccupation he came out openly as a Communist, but in February, 1948, he was expelled from the party because he disapproved of the program of violence outlined by Thakin Than Tun. Since then he has moved consistently closer to the position occupied by Thakin Nu.

**TRAN VAN GIAU**

Born in 1911 in Cochin China, Tran van Giau studied at the Lycée Chasseloup-Laubat in Saigon and later at Toulouse, where he came into prominence during student demonstrations on behalf of the French mutineers in the garrison at Yenbay, who massacred their officers in February, 1930. He was expelled from France and between 1931 and 1934 attended the Lenin School in Moscow; later he formed the spearhead of the Communist drive in Cochin China, while professing to be a historian and journalist in Saigon. He became the center of a vast network of rural Communist parties throughout South Indochina, and at one time was thought to be the inevitable leader of the party. Remaining in Saigon during the war years, he emerged as chairman of the provisional government of Cochin China. He was compelled to flee after the French attack on September 23, 1945, but in April, 1947, he was a delegate to the Asian Relations Conference at New Delhi and he appears to have been a kind of Viet-Minh roving commissioner, and at least once he is supposed to have entered Burma for secret discussions with Aung San. He was a member of the Marxist Study Group which later merged into the Tong Bo, and he has been secretary-general of the Cochin China Communist party since the party was founded. Now minister of propaganda in the Viet-Minh Government, he has made repeated visits abroad, to Burma in 1949 and to China in 1950. He is one of the most highly favored of the members of the Viet-Minh Government and completely in the trust of Ho Chih-minh.

**SETIADJIT**

Like Sjarifoeddin, Setiadjit seems to have been a secret Communist while remaining avowedly a socialist. He studied at Leyden University, and as the editor of *Vrij Nederland* he became a prominent leader of the resistance movement against the Nazis. There was a price on his head, and for some months he lived in an underground cellar in a farm near Amsterdam, being fed at night by the peasants. He returned to Indonesia shortly afterward, apparently sent by the Dutch Government in the hope that he would offer assistance in the protracted negotiations which were bound to occur with the revolutionaries. He took part in the Linggadjati negotiations, being,

with Sjahrir, a moderating influence; he also accompanied Dr. Koets on a famous trip into Republican territory in September, 1946. He became a chairman of the trade-union organization (SOBSI), a member without portfolio of Sjahrir's second cabinet, and in the spring of 1947, as the representative of the Indonesian trade unions, he attended the World Federation of Trade Unions, a Communist-inspired organization at Prague. Afterward he joined Sjarifoeddin's cabinet, became deputy premier (which was an honorific title rather than a post to be filled), and took part in the short-lived Madioen revolt. With Alimin Prawirodirjo he remains among the few Indonesian Communists of long repute who have not met death by the firing squad. He is known to be in hiding, but there is considerable doubt whether he exercises any power among the Communists.

### VO NGUYEN GIAP

This young lawyer who showed himself a master of defensive guerrilla strategy is second only to Ho Chih-minh in the power he wields in Indochina. He has been minister of the interior, minister of defense, and for a short while (during Ho Chih-minh's visit to France) acting president.

Born in 1912 at Quang Vinh in northern Annam, the son of a farmer, he joined the revolutionary organization when he was fourteen. Four years later he was arrested and imprisoned on Poulou Condore. In prison for a term of two years, he read furiously, and immediately after his release determined upon a career as a lawyer as the best means by which he could defend his people. From 1933 to 1937 he studied at the University of Hanoi, receiving his master's degree in law, and though he is addressed as "doctor," the title appears to be honorary. Even as a student he had become identified with the revolutionary movements, and he was famous for his inflammatory speeches. As soon as he had received his degree, he went into hiding, emerging in 1940 in Yen-an, where he made a careful study of Chinese Communist warfare against the Japanese. Returning shortly afterward to Viet-Nam, he began to put his knowledge to practice while organizing the farmers of northern Annam against the Japanese. He was the inevitable choice for minister of defense

in Ho Chih-minh's first cabinet, and he was prominent at the Dalat Conference of April, 1946. Regarding himself as the inevitable successor of Ho Chih-minh, who is now sixty and has been unwell for a long period, he tends to be as explosive and violent in his personal relationships as in his direction of the war, and at least once he has resigned as minister of defense, though he has continually retained the position of commander in chief of the Viet-Nam armies. In August, 1948, he resumed the portfolio of defense, a position which he still holds.



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